Tamil TIMES

"I do not agree with a word of what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."

– Voltaire

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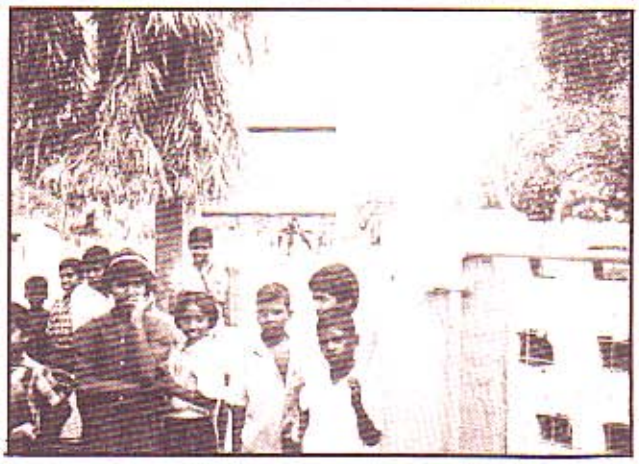

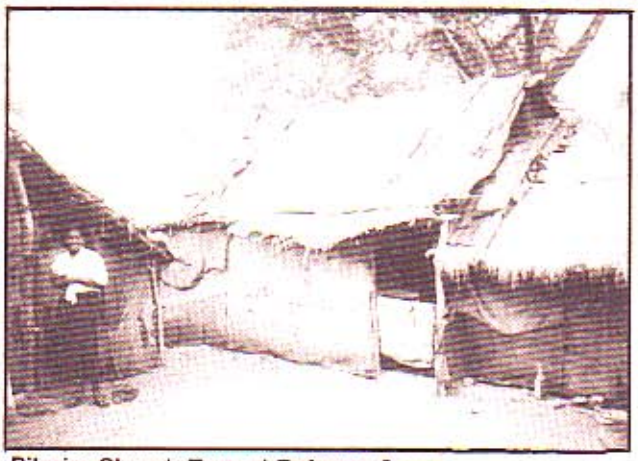

Pilgrim Church Turned Refugee Camp

★ 'Nation Has Lost Confidence in Political Leaders' – Bishops

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PLIGHT OF REFUGEES

The estimated number of people displaced from their homes and places of habitual residence in Sri Lanka is estimated to be over a million. And this figure keeps on mounting day by day as the fighting between government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam is continuing.

In the north of the island, the continuing battles between the warring parties and the relentless campaign of indiscriminate bombing from the air and shelling from land and sea by the security forces have led to thousands of casualties and forced tens of thousands to seek refuge in makeshift refugee camps. In the east of the country, the senseless and brutal massacres of defenceless civilians belonging to all communities and the resulting fear have again caused a refugee population of tens of thousands.

Hitherto, most of these refugees have been depending on the assistance, however meagre it may have been, given by the government in the form of money and dry rations for their sustenance and survival. Recently the government announced that the assistance given to the refugees was going to be halved, and the reason given for this proposed reduction was that the government did not have the required resources to continue with the same level of assistance.

At a time when the war is being intensified and more and more people are being displaced day after day, and when the government of Sri Lanka claims that it hasn't the resources to provide assistance to the internally displaced people, it is tragic that the Indian government has decided to implement an accelerated programme of repatriating over one hundred thousand Tamil refugees from India to Sri Lanka. There is no doubt that security considerations following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, and not humanitarian considerations, have motivated the Indian government's decision to return Tamil refugees to the island although the situation there is far from conducive to their return. The Sri Lankan government is in no position to provide either physical security or rehabilitation to the returning refugees.

People have not been displaced or become refugees by their own free will. It is the ongoing war carried on by those who have lost all feeling for their fellow men and women, the old, young and the infirm who are responsible for their plight. They have all the money and the weapons to continue to fight the war and replenish their war machine. Billions of rupees have been wasted in the purchase of lethal weapons of human destruction. However they claim that they have no resources to feed and clothe the refugees whose homes and livelihood have been decimated by the conscious and deliberate actions of these war mongers!

Until such time as the warring parties summon the political will to bring an end to this war and create conditions for the safe return of refugees to their homes, the Sri Lankan government cannot abdicate or abandon its elementary humanitarian responsibility to provide assistance to the refugees. In the meantime, the Indian government also should abide by its humanitarian obligations not to return the refugees until the situation in the island is conducive for their safe return.

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People & Politics

★ Premadasa's Indian Visit

Observers believe that the recent visit by President Premadasa to the capitals of the SAARC countries assumed a greater significance in that it has served to improve Indo-Sri Lanka relations which have remained cool for some time now. New Delhi's perception of Premadasa was conditioned by his known antipathy to the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987, his sudden and unilateral call for the departure of the IPKF three years ago, and his negotiations with the Tamil Tigers even as they were at war with the IPKF. New Delhi was said to have been very angry at the continuing reports that President Premadasa was in secret negotiations with the Tigers even after the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

But Premadasa's recent Indian visit and his negotiations with Prime Minister Narasimha Rao would appear to have opened up a new chapter in Indo-Sri Lanka relations. So much so the President stressed to journalists, 'After last year's elections in India, our relations have grown from strength to strength. We have no problems. We see things from the same perspective'. The joint statement issued following the meeting of the two leaders said, 'The President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India held wide-ranging discussions covering international, regional and bilateral issues in an atmosphere of friendship, goodwill and cordiality'.

Although his visit was in his capacity as Chairman of SAARC to discuss bilateral issues, President Premadasa was not averse to discuss with the Indian leader the island's intractable internal problem of the ethnic conflict, and the speeches, press statements and the joint communique issued following the talks between the two leaders reflected a conciliatory approach by both sides.

While Premadasa parried questions on the status of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement and described it as 'one-sided', and expressed his preference for 'a treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation' on the model of Indian agreement with the former Soviet Union, the President of India Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma during his speech at the banquet given in honour of the Sri Lankan President said, 'The Indo-Sri Lankan agreement was a sincere attempt to resolve the ethnic conflict which has sadly now gone on for well over a decade... What is needed is an effective devolution of powers within the framework of a united Sri Lanka in which all citizens of the country would be able to live a secure life with honour and dignity as equal citizens...'.

In regard to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, the joint communique recorded the viewpoints of the two sides. Mr. Premadasa 'stressed his Government's commitment to devise a peaceful negotiated settlement involving all the parties concerned', and that 'operations by the security forces in the North, which were necessary for the protection of innocent civilians, would continue'. The Indian Prime Minister 'expressed the hope that a fair and equitable settlement to fulfil the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil community within the framework of a united Sri Lanka would be achieved through the efforts of the Sri Lankan people themselves and by involving all those parties which have eschewed the path of violence'.

Observers note four important aspects in the Indian PM's above statement as reflecting India's current position regarding the ethnic conflict in the island: firstly, India's continuing concern for a settlement of the conflict on the basis of fulfilling the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil community; secondly, that such a settlement must be within the framework of a united Sri Lanka, which means no separate state; thirdly, such a settlement should be achieved through the efforts of the Sri Lankan people themselves, which means that the prospect of any direct Indian involvement is currently not envisaged; and fourthly, that all parties which have eschewed the path of violence must be involved in such a settlement, which means a deal with the LTTE alone would not be welcome.

To persistent questions by pressmen regarding alleged secret negotiations with the Tamil Tigers, Mr. Premadasa categorically denied that there were any ongoing negotiations with the LTTE. He said, 'We stretched our hands in friendship', and that his government did talk to the Tigers in the past, but that phase was over. He insisted that the LTTE must fulfil three preconditions before any negotiations could begin: firstly the Tigers should stop the use of arms; secondly they should agree to join the democratic process; and thirdly they must recognise the right of other Tamil parties to contest the elections.

Asked about the alleged LTTE involvement in Rajiv Gandhi's assassination and the prospect of Prabhakaran's extradition, without giving a direct reply Mr. Premadasa said, 'For all these things, there are laws in India and Sri Lanka; we do not want to mix things. Let them take their own course. Each issue will have to be taken up separately. Normal procedures will be followed'.

The *Times of India* editorially summed up Mr. Premadasa's visit in the following terms:

'At his press conference in Rashtrapati Bhavan on Friday Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa seized the opportunity to project an altogether reassuring image of himself both as current chairman of SAARC and as the President of the troubled island nation of Sri Lanka. This is no mean achievement considering the criticism the Sri Lankan leader often provokes in this country on account of his hostility to the IPKF, his reservations about the Indo-Sri Lanka treaty and his blow hot and cold attitude towards the LTTE. All this, it would appear, is now well and truly a thing of the past. The President indeed appeared to go out of his way to stress that after Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao assumed office, the relations between the two countries have grown from strength to strength.

'What is more, he drew satisfaction from the fact that on several matters of mutual concern or interest, India and Sri Lanka shared a common perspective. Even on the sensitive matter regarding the status of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, he sought to play down the differences... on the whole, however, the visit has served to clear the air of much of the mistrust which has bedevilled Indo-Sri Lankan relations. In Sri Lankan eyes India no longer figures as a "big brother", but as an "elder brother". The significance of this shift of perception cannot be minimised'.

★ Crackdown in Tamil Nadu

Dr. S. Ramadoss, founder leader of the Pattali Makkal Katchi (Proletarian Peoples Party – PMK), Mr. S. Ramachandran, a PMK Member of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, and P. Nedumaran, leader of the Thamilar Thesiya Iyakkam and hundreds of others were arrested and later released on bail and they now face charges ranging from conspiracy to sedition following the three day PMK Convention (September 10-12) held in Madras. The Convention on 'Tamils' Right to Live' concluded with a largely attended march in which some carried life-size card-board cutouts of Tamil

Tiger leader V. Prabhakaran and the suicide-bomb-assassin of Rajiv Gandhi, Dhanu who was hailed as a 'martyr'.

The arrests followed a decision by the Tamil Nadu government to launch a crackdown against the organisers of the Convention and march supporting the LTTE which is banned in India.

In an obvious exercise in stealing the mantle of M. Karunanidhi's DMK and Jayalalitha's AIADMK, which wre denounced and portrayed as 'traitors to the Tamils', the PMK formed only five years ago succeeded in holding a huge rally and march on 'an anti-north, anti-Hindi and anti-Brahmin platform'.

The Convention adopted two resolutions. The first one stated, 'In the interests of a just and durable peace in Sri Lanka, in the interests of our own defence and in the interests of human rights and saving Tamils there as well as here, this Conference requests the Government of India to ensure a peaceful emergence of Tamil Eelam consistent with world trends and recognise the same'.

The second resolution relating to the Tamils in Tamil Nadu stated that the PMK proposes 'to struggle for the restoration of the political and civil rights of the Tamils, including the right of self-determination to be enshrined in a new Constitution... Unity can be ensured only by a willingness of the people to stay together. The Constitution must reflect the political reality', and urged that the right to self-determination of all nationalities in India should be incorporated in the Constitution.

Both the Central and State governments have reacted sharply against the PMK and its allies. The Union Minister of Home Affairs, M.M. Jacob, warned: 'Those organisations who befriend, support and aid the banned LTTE will themselves have to be banned. Before taking any steps, the matter will be discussed with the Tamil Nadu government. The Central government has a very competent police force and intelligence services. We will find out the extent of the "friendship" between the PMK and the LTTE'.

The State Police carried out mass arrests.

★ Udugampola

The former Deputy Inspector General of Police, Premadasa Udugampola, who hit the headlines with his revelations about arbitrary killings by 'Black Cats' and the involvement of ruling party politicians in them, is assumed to be the most wanted man in Sri Lanka. But the authorities appear to have got nowhere near him to apprehend him. His appearance in court is required for the purpose of recording his statement in connection with the murder of lawyer Liyanarachchi. The notices repeatedly issued by the Magistrate remain unserved, and the CID has informed the court that they have been unable to trace his whereabouts.

From his hideout, now and then Udugampola makes his presence felt with his press statements and interviews. In response to a recent press report that the government had deployed some 500 police commandos to hunt him, in a hand-written letter to the press Udugampola said: 'This is fantastic; I don't think that the government has inducted 500 commandos even for the capture of Prabhakaran', and challenged President Premadasa to arrest him by deploying 5000 police commandos.

There have been widespread accusations against Udugampola himself being involved in the reign of terror and organised killings during the 1988-89 period. Now he alleges that the army and police got a bad name when the death squads known as the 'Black Cats' sponsored by ruling party men engaged in mass killings during that period. 'The evidence that I have (oral, documentary and circumstantial) is enough to bring those responsible before the judiciary on charges of mass murder (genocide), conspiracy and aiding and abetting to commit such murder.'

How serious are the authorities in their resolve to apprehend Udugampola? According to him, the government has so far failed to arrest him because the police are sympathetic to him and have lost faith in the government because of interference in their work, abuse of their services and state patronage extended to criminals.

Catholic Bishops' Conference

'Nation Has Lost Confidence in its Political Leaders'

The Catholic Bishops' Conference has called upon all concerned to commit themselves urgently to the task of establishing a just and peaceful society. The conference in a statement advocates the following, four-point formula to achieve the objective.

1. Take steps to review the present economic policies of the nation with a view to ensuring a more just sharing of its wealth among all strata of our society.

2. Strengthen the noble values of democracy by ensuring the emergence of a politically unbiased media on all sides and a healthy role for political dissent and diversity.

3. Get together as statesmen of stature, rising above petty party considerations, in order to find a definite political solution to the North East war.

4. Take every step as may be necessary for the social, moral and spiritual reawakening of this nation, building up further on our ancient religio-cultural traditions and values and freeing it from not only political but also economic dependence on others.

The statement issued by the conference headed by Archbishop Nicholas Marcus Fernando and signed by 11 other bishops is as follows:

'We, the Catholic Bishops of Sri Lanka, reflecting on the present situation of our beloved nation, wish to share our profound concern regarding certain contemporary trends and realities in our country. We cannot fail to heed the anguished cry of the poor and the marginalised sectors of our population. "I hear the cry of my people. I have come down to free them" (Exodus 3/7-8).

'In the light of our commitment to the gospel, which is good news to the poor, we feel duty-bound to point out these realities as they do not augur well, for our country and its people.

'The majority of our people are heavily burdened by the ever increasing cost of living. Despite the seeming affluence and the availability of luxury goods, the gap between the rich and the poor keeps ever widening. The prices of essential goods such as infant milk foods keep soaring, thus making them inaccessible to a large segment of the population. The lower income groups find that they cannot survive with what they earn and thus there is evidence of growing discontent, frustration and anger. The economic policies so far pursued have failed to bring about a just and equitable distribution of the resources of our land.

'In the recent past there have been

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many complaints that small farmers have no facilities to market their products at fair and just prices. While we accept that sufficient scope should be left for private initiative, our national assets and resources should not be permitted to fall into the hands of large scale and local and foreign investors.

'The economic marginalisation of the majority of our people has given rise to crime, violence, dishonesty, bribery and corruption. We witness an alarming erosion of social, moral and spiritual values that as a nation we always upheld as sacred according to our religious traditions. Politicisation of religion has proved detrimental rather than helpful in upholding and promoting religious and moral values among our people.

'Freedom of the press and respect for fundamental human rights are among some of the strongest indices of a loving democracy. Yet both these elements seem to be missing in Sri Lanka today. Enslaved by vested interests the mass media of our country whether owned by the state or by the private sector and different political parties, instead of serving the masses by stating the truth, seem to deliberately distort the truth seeking to keep the people in ignorance and even mislead the nation. Truth has become elusive. Instead of promoting growth, freedom and hope our media often attempt to fan the flames of ethnic and religious disharmony in Sri Lanka.

'The war in the North and East keeps on dragging indefinitely, resulting in massive loss of precious human lives and resources. There is no evidence of a determined political will to find a speedy and lasting solution. In this, all parties and their leaders have to share the blame. No one seems to be willing to sacrifice vested interests in the interest of the country and rise above party politics in a spirit of true statesmanship to save our beloved nation from further catastrophe. Genuine patriotism is sadly lacking in our political leadership. Instead of addressing the burning issues of our nation with a determined political will, to find speedy solutions, both the Government and the Opposition keep on exploiting this tragic situation to achieve their own objectives with scant regard to the plight of our people. There are some who encourage chauvinistic attitudes among the people in order to gain their own objectives. No politician seems to be ready to sacrifice his or her popularity for the greater good of the nation.

'While the war is being fought and untold sufferings are heaped upon the people, our political leaders, both Government and Opposition, appear to have lost their hold. As a result, this nation seems to have lost its confidence in its political leaders who seem to be accountable to no one. More and more people are becoming convinced that their leaders cannot free this nation from its economic, political or other woes.

'Addressing ourselves to these burning problems and trends and recognising our duty to exercise our prophetic role in the light of the Gospel and our own Faith, we make this earnest appeal to all concerned to commit themselves urgently to the task of establishing a just and peaceful society in Mother Lanka.

'We appeal to all men of goodwill in this nation to reflect deeply and, in a spirit of fraternity and mutual respect, urgently take corrective steps to heal these wounds and rebuild our nation.

'We also wish to call upon all Christians to implore the Lord to heal this nation of its wounds and make it whole once again. We must remember the words of MICAH – 6/8-10 and what does the Lord require of you "to do justice, to love kindness, to walk humbly with your God"'.

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Tigers Accuse 'Frontline' Editor of being an 'Indian Agent'

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) accused the Editor of the Hindu publication *Frontline*, Narasimhan Ram of being an agent of the Indian Government who had used his contacts with senior Shri Lankan leaders and the top LTTE hierarchy in the past to strengthen the Indian power projection.

In a press statement titled 'The true face of Mr. Ram', the LTTE theoretician Dr. Anton Balasingham said Mr. Ram who had talks with LTTE Political wing chief Yogarathnam Yogi on many occasions in 1985-86 period had showed himself as a strong supporter of the LTTE and its demand for an independent state. 'He adored Prabhakaran as a revolutionary, hero and progressive leader'.

'Mr. Ram advised us to make a request to the Indian government through (Tamil Nadu Chief Minister), MGR to send the Indian troops to achieve the goal of capturing the whole island', Balasingham said. He added that Mr. Ram had told them that 'Shri Lankan Government has to be taught a lesson'.

'He surprised us with his suggestion that the whole island should be captured', Balasingham admitted and said the LTTE had rejected the proposal. He said that the LTTE had rejected the suggestion for Indian military intervention because the whole island would have been under Indian influence.

Recalling that Mr. Ram had published an exclusive interview with Prabhakaran in *The Hindu* in September 1986 he said that 'the interview together with photographs was splashed covering the whole of the front page. That is the prominence the *Hindu* had given our leader'.

When the Indian government decided to detain Prabhakaran during the Bangalore SAARC Summit in 1986, 'Mr. Ram came running to us and offered to hide Prabhakaran at his house. He said that is the last place the police would suspect'.

Balasingham said that the LTTE had trusted Mr. Ram and it was through him that the LTTE had informed the Indian State Minister P. Chidambaram that the LTTE was willing to talk to Shri Lanka government on the Tamil homeland issue.

'When the talks failed Mr. Ram came and congratulated us', the LTTE statement said. 'He said it was too little and too late and said the only way available was to put more pressure on the Shri Lankan government'.

Parliamentary Select Committee

Framework for Settlement of Ethnic Conflict

Mr. Mangala Moonesinghe, MP, and Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Select Committee appointed to find ways and means to solve the ethnic conflict has put forward 'An Option Paper' containing a framework of proposals for a settlement of the conflict. The full text of the draft paper is as follows:

The framework and proposals embodied in this paper are based on the following considerations:

1. The question of the merger or non-merger of Northern and Eastern Provinces is a major contentious issue in the negotiations. Therefore, a solution acceptable to all parties without endangering the aspirations of all ethnic communities living in the two provinces, needs to be worked out. The framework proposed in this paper represents such a compromise.

ii. The proposed framework also embodies the possibility of further strengthening of devolution in the sense that it envisages devolution within the devolved unit.

iii. It also envisions ethnic integration through co-operation and consultation within the North-East region while further strengthening devolution.

The Framework and Proposals

I. There shall be **two separate Provincial Councils** for the Northern and the Eastern Provinces. The two Councils shall be elected on the basis of an electoral list agreed upon by all political parties.

II. Each Provincial Council shall be headed by an **Executive Minister.** The Executive Minister shall also be the head of the Board of Ministers of the Province.

III. There shall be a **Regional council for the entire North-East region,** and the Regional Council shall be constituted by the two elected Provincial Councils.

IV. When **the two Provincial Councils meet together** on matters pertaining to the entire region, they shall constitute themselves as the Regional Council.

V. **The Regional Council shall be headed by a Chief Minister for the entire North-East region.** The two Executive Ministers shall each year alternately function as the Chief Minister of the Region. **When one Executive Minister is the Chief Minister, the other may function as the Deputy Chief Minister.**

VI. When the two Provincial Boards of Ministers meet on matters relating to the entire region, they shall constitute the Regional Board of Ministers.

VII. **Legislative functions shall be jointly and separately exercised by the two Provincial Councils.** When the two Councils meet in joint session to exercise legislative functions jointly, they shall do so as a single legislative body for the entire region, constituted as the Regional Council. When the Councils meet separately, they shall do so for the respective Province.

VIII. For the purposes of legislative and executive action, there shall be a Regional List and a Provincial List.

IX. The Provincial Councils shall have legislative power in respect of matters (such as land, finance, and law and order) specified in the Provincial List and the Regional Council of matters (such as planning, economic development) specified in the regional list.

X. In the case of subjects specified as regional subjects, legislation passed by the Regional Council and having a direct bearing on a given Province shall not be operative until it is approved by the relevant Provincial Council. (This measure will in effect safeguard the rights of minority communities, particularly in the Eastern Province).

XI. There shall be one Governor for the entire Region.

XII. In each Province, the rights of ethnic and religious minorities shall be guaranteed by Constitutional arrangements.

Broader Issues Concerning Devolution

To strengthen devolution, for better center-province relations and for the promotion of national integration, the following measures relating to the national polity are proposed.

I. The creation of an Upper House of Parliament at the Center, consisting of 50 members. Each province shall elect three members to the Upper House. The province shall be the constituency for such elections. Of the remaining 23 seats, some will be nominated by the political parties represented in the Lower House in proportion to their numerical strength while the remaining seats shall be reserved for distinguished citizens (such as professionals, academics and developmental specialists) to be appointed by the President with the concurrence of the Leader of the Opposition.

II. The establishment of a Devolution Commission to co-ordinate and mediate in matters relating to center-province relations. The Commission shall consist of nominees of the central government and provincial councils.

III. The establishment of an independent Finance Commission, consisting of members nominated by both the central government and provincial councils.

Canadian Mission on Human Rights Violations

A Canadian Human Rights mission which visited Sri Lanka recently has recommended urgent international attention to solve the ethnic crisis and end human rights abuses both by state authorities and the LTTE.

A report by the mission states the people of Sri Lanka continue to suffer abuses of their basic human rights that are shocking and unacceptable.

'The fundamental freedoms of expression and association are severely restricted', the report states.

The Canadian mission says although the human rights situation has improved over the past few months, if measured in absolute terms by the number of unidentified bodies discovered or disappeared people, the level of violence remains appalling.

'The mechanism set up by the government to investigate and improve the situation is by no means equal to the task'.

The Indemnity (Amendment) Act officially shields any public servant from prosecution for alleged human rights violations committed prior to December 17th 1988. The Sri Lanka Bar Association asserts that the existence of this Act not only eliminates the punishment of those involved in disappearances prior to this date but encourages those who violate human rights to think that the government should extend the period covered by the Act, the report states.

Similarly the limitations based upon the mandate of the Presidential Com-

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Madhu church refugee camp: pictures of some of the victims who have been displaced from their homesteads

Pilgrim Church Turned Refugee Camp

by Rita Sebastian in Mannar

Sunday mass at Madhu church. The young priest is somewhat hard on his refugee congregation. He talks of man's greed. The more you have, the more you want. You might even stake a claim to the land you now occupy, he tells them.

Madhu has changed beyond recognition. Only the church remains constant. We remember those other times. The jungle shrine at Madhu came alive only at feast time. Otherwise it was virtually deserted. The stall holders would put down their shutters until the next feast, and the next pilgrim season.

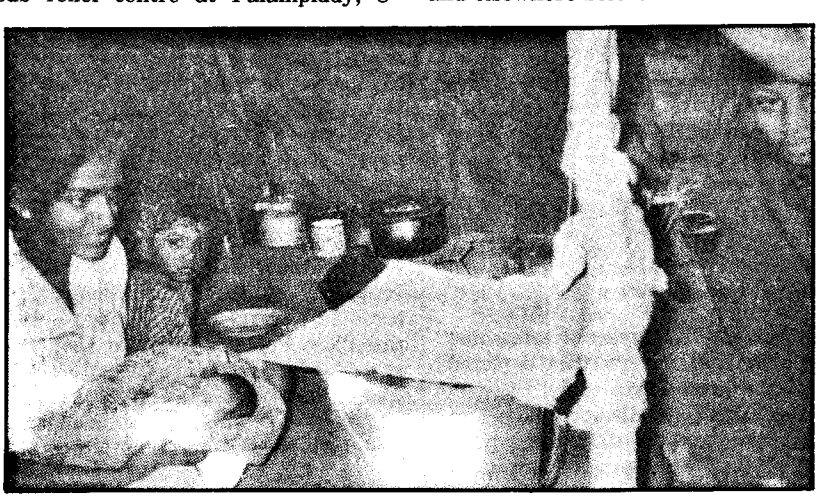
Today it is a sprawling village of cadjan-roofed huts, a thriving bazaar, and 29,000 refugees, the largest single relief centre in the island, administered jointly by the Madhu church and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

New settlement

Last Saturday UNHCR opened a sub relief centre at Palampiddy, 8 kilometres from Madhu. The once thickly wooded forest has been axed, and in its place has sprung up a new settlement to house 800 families. Refugee returnees from India are to get first priority and later there will be some movement from the Madhu centre.

But are more centres the answer to the problem. There is growing criticism, inside the camp itself, that free rations and free shelter has spawned a community increasingly dependent on the state, content to go on indefinitely as they are now. But it must be said in defence of many of them, that it is the overriding fear that they could easily become victims of the crossfire syndrome that prevents them returning to the homes they fled. It has happened before. And it can happen again.

What they really need is guarantees from the military that their security and safety will be assured, that there will be no retaliatory attacks like what happened in Mailanthanai recently, and elsewhere before.



Madhu assures them that safety. There is a 'gentleman's agreement' between the two sides, the government and the Tigers that the Madhu camp will not be interfered with. There are no arbitrary arrests and no kidnappings.

For a refugee settlement Madhu is well organised. Government officials function as camp co-ordinators, maintaining records of the refugee population, helping in the distribution of food rations, and providing a listening ear to the complaints.

In the bazaar you see native ingenuity at work. The embargo on petrol has made Preman Anthony, 22, turn out his own brand of fuel, vegetable oil mixed with kerosene, which he sells at Rs.100 a bottle. 'You use a drop of petrol, sold at Rs.1000 a litre to start off the engine and then feed it with the new mix', he says all smiles.

There are several young traders like Preman who do a thriving business and make a comfortable living in the circumstances. It is these people who will not suffer by a ration cut, or fisherman Anthonypillai who says he makes around Rs.200-300 a day.

The most vulnerable however are the widows like Rita Jesudasan from Cheddikulam, mother of two young children. Rita lost her husband, her mother and brother to the war, and is struggling to make a life for herself, but the odds weigh heavily against her as it does against the other 1300 widows in the camp.

Sisters of Charity

From Cheddikulam have also come the Sisters of Charity displaced in the new wave of hostilities that broke out in 1990. The door to the house with the

Continued on page 10

Petition to UN to Probe Killings and Disappearances of Tamils

A 40-page petition has been presented to the United Nations Secretary General on behalf of the Sri Lankan Tamils urging a probe into the alleged 'disappearances' and killings of Tamils by 'death squads' with the implicit support of security forces.

The petition focusses on the discrimination against the Tamil community by the Sri Lanka governments in the past four decades in the linguistic, educational and job areas, among others, besides violation of civil rights.

The petition also appeals to the UN Secretary-General to obtain the approval of the UN bodies to set up an *ad hoc* tribunal to hear complaints from the Sri Lankan Tamils of 'arbitrary arrests, disappearances, killings and attempted genocide' and to make its findings public.

The petition asks that appropriate sanctions be imposed against the Sri Lankan government if it failed to comply with the tribunal decisions.

The petition was presented to the U.N. authorities by Mr. Louis Kutner, chairman of the international commission on due process of law and Mr. Ved P. Nanda, Professor of Law, at the University of Denver.

The prime mover of the complaint is the New York-based Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) which was set up following an international conference of overseas Indians which discussed the plight of Indians in a number of countries. The GOPIO's convenor, Dr. Thomas Abraham, said this was the second petition sent to the U.N. The earlier one dealt with the human rights violations of the people of Indian origin in Fiji.

The petition, quoting from the findings of a Canadian delegation that visited Sri Lanka in January this year, said: 'Extensive and reliable evidence was presented to the Canadian team from a variety of sources. Detailing the widespread abuse of human rights by the security forces and by paramilitary groups cooperating with the Government. Today people live under the threat of extra-judicial killing, disappearance, torture and arbitrary arrest and detention at the hands of security forces'. The team found governmental cover-up of 'abusive acts' perpetrated in its name.

The petition also documents excerpts from the reports of Amnesty International and other human rights institutions. The petition refers to the exodus of Tamil refugees to Canada (50,000), India (200,000 officially and another 150,000 unofficially); Europe (100,000) and over 500,000 accommodated in refugee camps in Sri Lanka.

Continued from page 9

near crumbling walls they occupy, is always kept open. And there are hundreds of callers. They are like ministering angels visiting homes, teaching the children, and counselling the traumatised. Soon they will return to Cheddikulam, where the convent is being repaired.

Like the nuns, the priests at Madhu church are on a 24-hour call. But however irksome it can be sometimes Father Jesurjah, the church administrator and his fellow priests take it in their stride for they must believe with the American psychologist, William James 'that religion to be meaningful must relate to the people. One has to think of God in the better aspirations of humanity'.

Madhu has its share of heart-warming stories like that of disabled Jacintha Miranda. Jacintha cannot walk yet. Her determination has seen her through university and got her a degree in political science. Although displaced, she gets transported by bicycle to nearby Pandivirichchan 4 kilometres away, where, in a temporary shed she teaches A/Level students.

Although, according to the Government Agent Mannar, Kandiah Ganesh the last maha crop met the total paddy requirements of the people in the district and left a surplus of 6000 metric tons, Madhu is now experiencing a severe drought with the wells running dry and the people cycling miles to get their requirements of water.

'Drought or rain I want to go back to my village. How else do you think I can find the dowry to get my daughter married', asks Vadivel a recent returnee from India.

International Award for Writer Detained by Tigers

COLOMBO, Sept. 4

A feminist Tamil poet, held captive for a year by Tamil Tigers, has won an international writing award for her efforts to defend freedom of expression.

The PEN organisation said today 28-year-old Selvanithy, known commonly as Selvi, had won its 1992 Freedom-to-Write award, a decision that was made six months ago.

But PEN president, Edmund Keeley said in a press statement that the group had been advised against naming Selvi by her friends for fear of what the Tamil rebels might do to her.

A year after she was detained by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, and with no news of her whereabouts or condition, her friends had decided that the time had come to reveal she had received the award, Keeley said.

Selvi, a third-year student at the University of Jaffna in Tamil rebel-controlled northern Jaffna, was taken hostage on August 30, 1991.

She is the founder of a feminist journal and in her writing deplored the carnage in the conflict between Tamils and Sinhalese. She has also produced two plays.

PEN, a world association of poets, playwrights and novelists, said Selvi was captured because of her unusually frank criticism in her writing and in private conversation of the Tigers' methods of dealing with dissent in Jaffna.

Newspapers and journals are subject to strict Tiger control and other Tamils have been detained or executed for criticising the rebels.

Rebel sources were not available for comment.

Keeley said: 'It is time for the Tigers to demonstrate that peaceful, well-intentioned criticism from within their own community is not only tolerated but encouraged. If they want to gain respect from the international community, they should show themselves to be committed to safeguarding internationally respected rights. They can do this only by releasing Selvi and others like her'.

The PEN Freedom-to-Write awards are given annually to two writers who have shown remarkable courage in exercising or defending freedom of expression and who have suffered repercussions as a result. The selection is made by the PEN Freedom-to-Write Committee. The awards have been presented each year since 1987; past recipients included the Malawian poet Jack Mapanje and the Moroccan essayist Abraham Serfaty.

Change in Command Structure of Armed Forces

President R. Premadasa, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief, has changed the command structure of the Armed Forces by restoring with immediate effect full powers to the Joint Operations Command headed by Lt. General Hamilton Wanasinghe.

A Gazette notification to this effect has been issued in the wake of a major military debacle at Koddaikadu near Vettilaikkerni on October 1 and other factors, including large-scale desertions, high level government sources told *The Sunday Times*.

The LTTE overran a small army camp, ransacked it and got away with sophisticated weapons and equipment valued at a staggering Rs. 50 million.

The Government, by an earlier Gazette Extraordinary issued on March 20 this year, had assigned the task of commanding the operations in the operational areas to the Service Commanders and the Police Chief. That order said: 'The armed forces and such officers of the Police forces as are engaged in anti-terrorist operations, shall not withstanding the assignment of such duties remain under the respective commands of the Commander of the Army, the Commander of the Navy, the Commander of the Air Force and the Inspector-General of Police, as the case may be'.

'The aforesaid Commanders and Inspector-General shall collectively plan, formulate, decide and carry out anti-terrorist operations and be responsible for the same'.

The March 21 Gazette notification had rescinded certain provisions in the Emergency Regulations promulgated by Government on November 11, 1991, re-activating the Joint Operations Command. The November 11 regulations had given overall authority to the JOC Chief.

That order said: 'The armed forces and such officers of the police as are engaged in anti-terrorist operations shall be under the command of the general officer commanding Joint Operations and for this purpose the Commander of the Army, the Commander of the Navy, the Commander of the Air Force and the Inspector-General of Police shall act under his command'.

Informed sources said yesterday the November 11 order which had been over-ridden by the March 20 order, has now been re-activated – which means the Armed Services and the Police shall be under the Command of the JOC Chief again.

In recent months, there had been widespread reports of differences of opinion between the JOC Chief and the Service Commanders, especially Army Commander Cecil Waidyaratne. There were also differences of opinion between the Service Commanders and the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, General Cyril Ranatunge.

Tigers Acquire Fast Boats

Sea Tigers have successfully acquired a fleet of fast boats and foreign expertise to expand their operations against the government security forces, especially the Navy, informed sources said. Sea Tigers trying to sabotage naval operations particularly in the northern theatre of operations are claimed to have sought help from foreign 'sources' for training, sources believe.

The latest Sea Tiger operation was reported from Karainagar in the Karaithivu island where the Navy maintains its northern area headquarters, sources explained. Two members of the Sea Tigers who attempted to infiltrate defences of the Karainagar 'base' were shot dead by security forces personnel, a military spokesman said.

Meanwhile the Navy was on alert to prevent the Sea Tigers from using a seized 30ft long inshore patrol craft to mount a possible attack on a naval base on the eastern port, Trincomalee authoritative sources indicated. Tigers described by the London based Tiger Secretariat as members of the Special Task Force division of the Sea Tigers, on August 29 in a commando type raid seized a locally made patrol craft from the Navy controlled Mandathivu Island.

Reliable sources said the Sea Tigers were certain to use the patrol boat to launch an attack on the Sri Lankan Navy itself or the Indian fishermen and then blame it on the Sri Lankan government.

Cheap Arms Offer to Sri Lanka

A former Communist country has offered Sri Lanka a major arms package consisting of the latest battle tanks, helicopter gunships, armoured personnel carriers and missile boats, knowledgeable sources have said.

The sources said the offer, for surplus equipment which the former Warsaw Pact country has to get rid of under East-West arms reduction treaties, comes with a US $100 million (Rs. 4.5 billion) five year credit package.

Cheap surplus weapons from the former Communist bloc states became available after the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty was signed in November 1990 by NATO and the now-defunct Warsaw Pact limiting the number of tanks, artillery pieces, attack helicopters and combat aircraft each country can have.

The sale of such surplus weapons is allowed under a treaty loophole which provides for the export of equipment limited by the treaty.

The sources said the flood of cheap surplus weapons on the international arms market has given a number of Third World countries like Sri Lanka the opportunity to modernise their armed forces.

Sri Lanka has already exploited the windfall provided by the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the availability of cheap weapons which have to be got rid of under the CFE treaty by buying a regiment of T-55 battle tanks from Czechoslavakia at unbelievably low prices last year.

But the sources said the military was wary about buying from former Communist countries because of their unfamiliarity with East European technology and possible problems in the supply of spares in future.

They also said the main constraint which would preclude any major acquisitions from these sources was likely to be the acute lack of funds.

They said the offer by the former Communist country was for modern battle tanks, amphibious troop carriers, high speed patrol boats carrying guns and missiles and the latest armour-plated helicopter gunships armed with cannons, rockets and missiles.

Standing Committee of Tamil Speaking People (S.C.O.T.)

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'Country Haunted by Corruption and Terror' – Archbishop

'The entire nation is afflicted with a deadly disease. Thousands are getting killed, wounded and rendered homeless due to the ethnic war. Corruption and terror have not yet ceased to haunt the country. Truth and justice have suffered. It is difficult to find the truth in a newspaper', lamented the Archbishop, the Most Rev. Nicholas Marcus Fernando at the annual healing service conducted at Tewatte recently.

Addressing the hundreds of thousands that had gathered in front of the National Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka on August 30 the Archbishop said: 'When I look at the crisis facing the nation I am reminded of the teaching of Jesus that you cannot serve God and mammon. We have to choose one or the other'.

The Archbishop's speech has been published in the September 6 issue of 'Messenger'.

According to 'Messenger' the Archbishop also said. 'At the root of the crisis is the greed for power and wealth. If we choose to serve the Kingdom of God and His justice and walk in the path that he has shown us, we will be able to achieve the peace and unity that we so desperately need.

'Let us in solidarity with the entire nation pray to our Blessed Mother for the healing of our wounded bleeding nation', he appealed.

20 Army Men Held for Massacre of 39 Tamils

At least twenty army personnel were being held and interrogated by military authorities probing the August 8 massacre of 39 Tamil civilians at Mailanthanai, a remote Tamil village in the Batticaloa District, according to the first annual report released by the chairman of the Human Rights Task Force, J.F.A. Soza.

Mr. Soza claims in the report that steps were being taken to hold an indentification parade despite difficulties posed by the rule that in identification parades where several persons have to be put up for identification the number of persons constituting the parade should be five times more than the number of suspects.

The deaths of over thirty soldiers and policemen in Poonani area on July 29 and the explosion in Kayts Island on August 8 which claimed the lives of popular military leaders may have prompted the revenge attacks on the Tamil civilians, the report indicates.

The happenings in Poonani and Kayts, no doubt, made the soldiers give vent to their anger and resentment, the report states.

The report further states that the police investigating the attack now have several witnesses who claim that they were in a position to identify the attackers as members of the Army.

The number of dead mostly women and children has been placed at 39 and at least 11 houses set on fire.

Meanwhile, arrangements were being made to bring twenty more army personnel including a junior commissioned officer before a three-member military court to answer charges in connection with the massacre of 67 Tamils at Kokkadicholai on June 12 last year.

Journalists Form Action Committee

Sri Lanka's journalists have formed an action committee to combat what they claimed was government's opposition to a free press, says a recent IPI report published by the International Press Institute.

More than 500 journalists held a meeting in the capital, Colombo, to adopt a seven-point programme which called on all political parties and other mass organisations to safeguard freedom of the press.

'We want the repeal or the amendment of laws which prohibit the press from fulfilling its duty', said Lucien Rajakarunanayake, one of the organisers of the new movement. He added: 'there is a lot of covert and overt opposition to free media'.

Mr. Rajakarunanayake pointed to two of the more repressive laws: one which prohibits reporting on Cabinet decisions unless they have been announced by Government spokesmen and the other a ban on reporting of any news which affects the country's economic well-being.

The meeting also called for the dismantling of Government control over state-run radio and television, and over a newspaper chain which publishes two of the country's three English-language dailies.

There are more than 2,000 journalists in Sri Lanka. Most work for the prolific press published in Sinhala – the language of the Sinhalese majority.

Some Sinhala-language newspapers are critical of the Government. Over the past three months, two editors have been charged with spreading disaffection against the Government through their news reports. – (*IPI Report*).

SAARC Opposition Leaders Urge Guarantees for Fair Elections

South Asian opposition leaders recently agreed on the need for impartiality on the part of heads of state during elections and called for guarantees not to manipulate elections and for polls to be conducted by an independent commission free from administrative interference in each country.

'Since both the government and opposition represent the people, there is need for a measure of tolerance and mutual respect', they said in a joint declaration of the SAARC seminar of opposition leaders of SAARC countries in Karachi.

The opposition should have free access to information on important issues, it said.

The declaration was signed by Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, Leader of the Opposition and Co-Chairperson, Pakistan People's Party, Mr. V.P. Singh, former Indian Premier and National Front Leader, Mr. Shaikh Hasina, Awami League President and Bangladesh Opposition Leader, Anura Bandaranaike, SLFP National Organizer, and Manmohan Adhikari, President of the Communist Party of Nepal and Opposition Leader.

The five leaders said the state should provide money to all major political parties whether in the government or in the opposition on the basis of proportion of votes cast for each party to fund policy planning and research and training of political workers.

They called for a regional review of electoral arrangements to ensure that elections in the SAARC countries are free and fair.

The leaders also reaffirmed the principles of national independence, sovereignty and equality of the countries of SAARC and emphasized the need to settle disputes by peaceful means and to seek political solution to the outstanding issues between the countries of the SAARC region.

The leaders decided to meet together periodically and to exchange information on a regular basis about the role of the opposition and the impediments in the way of democratic dispensation.

Eight Army Men Named in 'Disappearance' of 32 Students

Eight army personnel of the Sevana Camp have been named by the Human Rights Task Force as 'responsible for the abduction and detention' of the 32 schoolboys reported missing in Embilipitiya since 1989.

Task Force Chairman, former Supreme Court Justice, J.F.A. Soza, in his first annual report, has called for 'a full scale inquiry', by the law enforcement authorities into this incident. The HRTF report names eight personnel of Army's 6th Artillery Unit manning the Sevana Camp at that time as having been identified according to the statements made by parents of the missing students.

Task Force Chairman Soza states in his annual report for the period between August 10 last year and August 10 this year, that the HRTF had conducted its own investigations into the allegation of the abduction and disappearance of the schoolboys.

The HRTF report states, 'The gravamen of their complaint' was against a certain school principal who had taken advantage of some controversy to 'get students to organise demonstrations and processions'. Subsequently this principal 'could not control the demonstrations and processions.... that he himself initially helped organise', the report says. The principal had then struck up a friendship with the colonel commanding the army unit in the area.

The HRTF report says that this principal had suggested to various other school heads and government officials of the area that 'they should abduct seven or eight of the student leaders and so stop the processions and demonstrations'. These officials had disagreed.

Subsequently various students had been taken into custody.

Referring to allegations of a 'list' of students made by this principal, the report says that there is evidence of the abduction of 18 boys.

In addition to naming the eight personnel, the report identifies an army colonel and a captain as the 'officers in charge of the army men'.

The HRTF report states:

'Only a full scale inquiry by the law enforcement authorities would help to assess how much of what is stated is true and the involvement and criminal responsibility of the persons mentioned. We learn such an inquiry is in progress and will be concluded with the recording of the statements of certain army personnel who are difficult to contact as they are engaged in different parts of the country.

'The HRTF felt a private plaint could be filed for conspiracy to abduct and abduction against a soldier and the school principal.

'We made joint preparations in February 1992 to take this step but the persons concerned did not turn up for finalising the filing of the plaints and the move did not get off the ground.

'The parents are demanding a Commission of Inquiry. An inquiry whether under the Commissions of Inquiry Act No. 17 of 1948 or under the Special Presidential Commissions of Inquiry Law No. 7 of 1978 will not result in punishment of offenders under the Penal Code. Such punishment can be imposed only by a court of law. An inquiry by a Commission will only be a fault finding process and can result in the imposition of civil and fiscal disabilities but will delay the bringing of the offenders to book under the Penal Law which is what we think is the better option'.

7356 Detentions & 3589 'Disappearances'

Human Rights Task Force Chairman, J.F.A. Soza has strongly recommended that a person should not be held without a Court trial, however valid the detention, for more than three years.

In the annual report of the Human Rights Task Force (HRTF) for the period between August 10, 1991 and August 10, 1992 former Supreme Court Justice Soza said: 'Dateless detention such as is possible under Regulation 17 (of the Emergency Regulations) is frustrating and demoralising and in the long run will not serve to ensure a stable order. Even as a deterrent it is counter productive.

'Primacy should be given to the international norms on human rights in the implementation of human rights standards at the national level.

'Even though international law is woven into our constitution our domestic laws like the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations require toning down', HRTF Chairman said.

He observed that right now detentions under the Prevention of Terrorism Act were not frequent. 'Most of the detentions are under Regulations 19 and 17 of the Emergency Regulations. Detention under Regulation 17 is not regulated by time limits. Detention under the above regulations is preventive and not punitive'.

'Even recently the Supreme Court held that Regulation 17 is *intra vires* the constitution. So much for the law. But in terms of humane principles Regulation 17 is undoubtedly very severe', it said.

According to HRTF, the number of detainees held in six official detention camps, six rehabilitation camps, in some police stations and army camps is 7356. Of these 5628 are Sinhalese, 1645 Tamils and 83 Muslims. there are 1796 Sinhalese persons and 21 Tamils and three Muslims held at the Boossa Detention Camp. There are 692 Tamils, 16 Sinhalese and nine Muslims at New Magazine Colombo Detention Camp.

According to the report 368 Tamils, three Muslims and one Sinhalese are being held at the Kalutara Detention Camp. Pelwatte detention camp has 1187 Sinhalese, 13 Tamils and 30 Muslims.

Based on information received by HRTF upto August 10 this year 3589 persons have been reported missing, of this amount, 2143 were from Batticaloa, 648 from Ampara, 188 from Trincomalee and 146 from Polonnaruwa.

Continued from page 7

mission of Inquiry into the involuntary removal of persons which limits investigations of complaints of removal to those occurring after January '91 calls into question the government's public commitment to uncover and stop all human rights abuses.

Referring to the LTTE, the Canadian Human Rights team has said it was presented with convincing evidence of continuing human rights abuses being perpetrated by the armed cadres of the LTTE. Although as an armed opposition group, the LTTE may not be directly subjected to the norms of humanitarian law, international human rights conscience dictates that abuses of the LTTE be condemned.

Like the security forces the LTTE maintains secret detention centres where people are routinely abused and from where they often disappear. The centres are subject to no external monitoring and the reports reaching the Canadian team indicates that the conditions of detention are often dreadful. The LTTE has never produced a comprehensive list of detainees so that family members who live in agony could known the fate of their loved ones, the report state.

ETHNIC CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA

Alternative Solutions

by Prof. Marshall R. Singer
Graduate School of Public and International Affairs
University of Pittsburgh

After looking briefly at the background of the problem, and at the obstacles to a solution from both the Sinhalese and Tamil perspectives, and then examining the factors pushing the parties toward a settlement, this paper then looks at alternative solutions. It constructs a theoretical continuum on which all states can be placed. At the extreme right it postulates a completely unitary state – which is where the Sinhalese extremists want Sri Lanka to go back to. At the extreme left it postulates a totally independent Tamil state (Tamil Eelam), where Tamil extremists want it to be. In between it looks at all of the theoretical points that one can imagine. It concludes that neither the Tamil extremists nor the Sinhalese extremists have the power to impose their desired solution on the other. Since it is inevitable that there is eventually going to have to be some devolution of power to some level of government below the center, it is suggested that the parties recognize reality and act accordingly. Since the Provincial Council are already in place, constitutionally, and since it is unlikely that anyone is going to be able to muster 2/3 of Parliament to change the constitution in the near future, it is suggested that the combatants recognize that reality and use the Provincial Councils as starting points to negotiate the specifics of exactly how much power is actually to be devolved to them. Once an agreement is reached, (assuming it can be) the government will have to implement it, if peace is finally to be achieved.

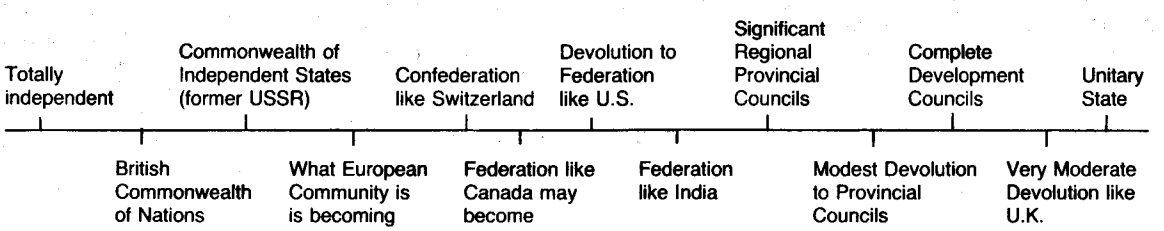
BACKGROUND

For the person not familiar with the specifics of the Sri Lanka situation some background is in order. Sri Lanka is an Island about the size of West Virginia, situated at its closest point just 18 miles off the southeastern coast of India. It has a population of about 18 million people, 71% of whom are Sinhalese. The Sinhalese are a people of north Indian descent, who speak the Sinhalese language, are predominantly Buddhist, and who came to the Island about 2500 years ago. The Tamils make up about 22% of the population. About half of them are ancestors of people who came to the Island in successive invasions from south India, at least 1000 years ago. They settled predominantly in the north and east of what Westerners used to call Ceylon, particularly in the Jaffna peninsula. Hence they are frequently referred to as Ceylon Tamils, or Jaffna Tamils. The other half of the Tamil population who live on the Island were brought over by the British in the late 19th century to work on first the coffee, and later, the tea plantations that took their place. They and their progeny never left. But they have always been very separate from the Ceylon Tamils. They live in the mountains around Nuwara Eliya, and keep very much to themselves. The vast majority of Tamils practice the Hindu religion. The Muslims, of various ethnic origins, comprise 5% of the population, and live all over the Island, although their main concentration is in the Eastern Province, where they constitute one third of the population. Although their mother tongue tends to be Tamil (because they settled in predominantly Tamil areas) they are not of Tamil ethnic origin. The remaining 2% of the population are called Burgers. They are the offspring of Portuguese, Dutch and British former colonial masters, and native women, and are almost exclusively Christians, as are another 8% of the population, both Sinhalese and Tamil.

Depending on one's political predilection, one can date the start of the Tamil/Sinhalese ethnic conflict from the start of those first south Indian invasions, 1000 years ago, or one can be more recent and point to the situation at Independence in 1984. I don't want to get into all of the specifics here, but one must mention the fact that when the Portuguese arrived in 1505 they found separate Tamil Kingdoms in the North and East of the Island, and separate Sinhalese Kingdoms in the South and in the Kandian hills. One must also mention that at the time of Independence the Tamils held positions in the upper civil service, and the professions (like medicine, engineering, accountancy, business, education etc.) far in excess of their proportion in the population. Again, depending on one's political predilection, that could be explained as the consequence of the British efforts to divide and rule, during colonial days, or it could be explained by the fact that nothing very much grows in the Northern Province, and hence the Tamils took quite naturally to the British education system, and the jobs within that system, that could be had by English educated people. In any event, it is true that the Tamils were very much over-represented in the most sought after jobs at the time of Independence. It is also true that Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike's 'Sinhalese Only' language

Figure 1

THEORETICAL CONTINUUM OF DEVOLUTION OF POWER



policy of 1956, was intended to remove those Tamils from those jobs, and open them up for the Sinhalese.

One also needs to know that there have been a number of agreements worked out between the leaders of the Tamils and the Sinhalese governments of the day, but that in each case Sinhalese chauvinists immediately screamed 'sell-out of the Sinhalese people', and, within days of the agreements having been signed the government reneged on the agreements. That is one of the reasons that young Tamils eventually became disillusioned with the political process and decided that the only way there could be any meaningful change for the Tamil people would be to have their own separate country (called 'Tamil Eelam') and the only way they could get that country was by the bullet.

Fighting between the Tamils and the Sinhalese has been going on, with varying degrees of intensity, since the late 1970s. Thousands of young fighters on both sides have been killed, as well as tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children who just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

OBSTACLES TO A SOLUTION:

Among the Sinhalese:

1. The Sinhalese have simply never understood the concept of 'federalism'. They insist that Sri Lanka is one indivisible Island, and that to introduce federalism would be to divide the island. The more suspicious among the Sinhalese, of course, believe that 'federalism' is just the first step toward total independence for the Tamils. Hence they oppose it. In addition they see Sri Lanka as being 'their's'. 'The Tamils can always go back to India where they came from', the more chauvinist among them would argue, while the Sinhalese have nowhere else to go. Sri Lanka is seen as their country, a Sinhalese Buddhist entity unique in the world. The Tamils are still seen by many Sinhalese as interlopers who either have to assimilate to Sinhalese culture or get out.

2. There are two major Sinhalese parties. The ruling United National Party (UNP), and the opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). As Donald Horowitz rightly observed [see Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* Univ. of California Press, Berkeley, 1985], when you have two major ethnic parties competing for the allegiance of the same ethnic group, any concession by the party in power will be seized upon by the party out of power as a sign of weakness, and again, of 'selling-out our people'. That is exactly what has been continually happening in Sri Lanka.

3. The government now believes that it can wipe out the last remaining Tamil militant group fighting them, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE, or frequently, just 'the Tigers').

Because of the isolated position in which they currently find themselves, (which will be explained in a moment) there is no doubt that the government can deal them a very heavy blow. Whether they can be wiped out, however, remains to be seen. This author doubts it.

Among Tamils:

1. Most Tamils simply do not trust Sinhalese promises. That is what caused the rise of Tamil militancy among the young in the first place. Too many agreements have been broken, too many promises of 'devolution of power', or 'autonomy' have been made, but not honoured.

2. Tamils are even more divided, politically, than are the Sinhalese. At the height of the Tamil militancy there were at least 5 major militant groups, and at least 32 factions among them. Moderate Tamils, for a time, banded into one umbrella organization called the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), but that really represented a number of different, competing factions. The LTTE, the oldest, largest, and most fanatical of the militant groups, has killed many members of other militant groups whom they accuse of being not sincere about their adherence to the concept of Tamil Eelam. Tamil moderates who have expressed a willingness to compromise with the Sinhalese have also been killed by the LTTE, accused of being traitors to the Tamil cause. The young Tamil militants who survived LTTE attacks on their groups accuse the LTTE of being power hungry fanatics who have turned on their brothers in the Tamil movement to aggrandize their own group. It should also be noted that; a) at least among older generation Tamils, caste is still an important consideration; b) many of the young boys who joined the various militant groups are of lower caste than are the traditional Tamil politicians; and c) the EPRLF (Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front – one of the major groups now fighting the LTTE) is a militant group which had its origins in the Eastern Province, rather than in the North, which is the home of the LTTE. What's more, in recent years, particularly, the EPRLF has recruited increasingly lower caste Tamils. Further, while the Indian Peace Keeping Force was in Sri Lanka (from July 1989 to March 1990) they made every effort to build up the EPRLF as a viable alternative to the Tigers.

The LTTE, until now at least, has demanded to be the only voice of the Tamil Eelam movement. Moderate Tamils and militants who have survived LTTE attacks believe the LTTE will kill them at the first opportunity they get. Similarly, the LTTE sincerely believes that they cannot disarm because if they do, an awful lot of angry Tamils (as well as revengeful Indians and Sinhalese) will come after them and kill them. One of the major problems the government has faced throughout the fighting has been to find Tamils who can legitimately claim to talk for other Tamils. The moderates tried and they were killed. Other militant groups tried and they were killed. The LTTE has sometimes tried, but the other militant groups refuse to let the LTTE represent them. Until the Tamils can get themselves together enough to field a joint negotiating team, it will be virtually impossible to reach a settlement.

4. All Tamil militant groups believe that the 'Tamil homeland' must be treated as one political unit. This means a permanent merger of the North and East Provinces. They have been temporarily merged under the terms of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accords of July 1989, but there was supposed to have been a referendum to confirm that merger, but the referendum never occurred. Interestingly, it would appear that more moderate Tamils really don't care one way or the other whether the two provinces are merged or not. For their part, however, many Sinhalese are prepared to fight to the death to keep the two provinces separate. In addition, although they speak the Tamil language, the Muslims of the East are not too happy about being made a permanent minority in a province in which the overwhelming majority would be Tamil. One third of the Eastern Province is Sinhalese, and needless to say, they are not too happy about the prospect of being included in a Tamil dominated province either.

FACTORS PUSHING THE PARTIES TOWARD A SETTLEMENT;

1. The vast majority of the ordinary Tamil people are tired of the fighting. Their lives and livelihoods have been completely disrupted by it. Hardly a family has been spared the loss of a loved one. Hardly a home hasn't been at least partly damaged, if not destroyed in all the fighting thus far, and

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more seems to be on the horizon. They want to get on with living their lives. They can't while the fighting continues.

2. The Sinhalese are also tiring of the fighting. Less so than the Tamils, perhaps, because it doesn't touch them as directly, but indirectly it does. Sinhalese soldiers are still being killed. Sinhalese civilians pushed out of their villages by Tamil militants are still living in camps, afraid to go back to their villages. And money that should be going to develop the country is going, instead, to the war effort.

3. The donor countries who give Sri Lanka millions for development each year (455 million U.S. dollars last year alone) are running out of patience. They have many other places begging for money for development. They don't have to give it to a country that spends enormous sums of their own money (U.S.$ 1 million per day, at one point) fighting a war against their own population.

4. Even the LTTE may now be willing to discuss a settlement short of total Eelam. If true, this is a complete switch for the LTTE, which has, until now, killed other Tamils for considering anything short of Eelam. The reason undoubtedly is that the LTTE now finds itself almost completely isolated. They have entered into talks with the Sinhalese before, but have, for reasons which seem inexplicable to the Sinhalese, turned on them in the middle of the discussions. The Indian Peace Keeping Force came to Sri Lanka in July 1989 thinking they were going to disarm **all** of the militants and, by their presence on the Island force the Sinhalese to implement the Indo-Sri Lankan Accords, which called for a considerable degree of devolution of power to the Provincial Councils, in particular the now merged Northeast Provincial Council. From the Indian perspective they were doing the Tamils a favour and giving them, if not Eelam, at least a form of federalism which many of them were very willing to accept. But the LTTE wasn't willing to accept that solution and they turned on the Indians. At least a thousand Indian soldiers were killed as a result, and thousands more were injured. No one who is not a part of the LTTE knows for sure how many LTTE boys were killed in the fighting, but it had to have been a lot. But if that didn't alienate the Indians enough, (the reader must recall that almost all of the militant groups – including the LTTE – were armed and trained in India in the early days of the movement, and used it as a safe sanctuary until 1989), the Indians seem to have fairly conclusive evidence that the LTTE was responsible for the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, and seem to be prepared to go to court to prove it. Now the LTTE is really isolated. Not only are the Sri Lankan armed forces coming after them, but so are remnants of the other militant groups whom the LTTE had previously turned on. In addition, it is reported, these Sri Lankan Tamil militants have been armed and trained anew by the Indians, this time presumably with the knowledge and assistance of the Sri Lankan government to finish off the LTTE, once and for all. It is this author's belief that won't happen. The LTTE will simply make itself very scarce in the jungle while the troops play cat and mouse looking for them. My informants tell me that Prabakaran (the leader of the LTTE) is already out of the country. Other leaders probably are too. Eventually the government is, I believe, going to have to talk with the LTTE, along with other Tamil representatives.

5. It is my belief that President Premadasa desperately wants a settlement well in advance of the next Presidential elections, scheduled for 1994. First of all, it would be a major 'feather in his cap' if he could go down in history as the President who brought peace after all those years of fighting. But he would not be willing to be known as the President who agreed to the dismemberment of Sri Lanka. Any devolution that he can accept, must be one in which he is perceived by the Sinhalese to have preserved the unitary integrity of Sri Lanka. Second, he wants a solution because he really does want to see Sri Lanka get on with its economic development. I believe he is convinced that he can turn Sri Lanka, if not into the Singapore of the Indian Ocean, then certainly into the Malaysia. Even with the war still going on, economic growth has been continuing, tourists have been coming back, and Chinese investors from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore all seem to be looking at Sri Lanka as a potential place to invest – provided that stability can be insured. Hence a peaceful settlement is very important to Premadasa – just as soon as he is done killing as many LTTE as he can get his hands on.

6. I believe that India wants a settlement. It wants a settlement short of Eelam, to be sure, but it wants a settlement. (If Sri Lanka were to grant independence to Tamil Eelam, it would not be long until every state in India also demanded independence, and realized that all they need to do to achieve it would be to maintain an armed struggle for as long as possible.) I realize that there are those in Sri Lanka who believe that the Indians do **not** want to see the ethnic crisis ended. They believe that India perceives it to be in its own interest to have Sri Lanka destabilized so that the Sri Lankan government will eventually have to come to the Indian government and ask for help. I simply don't buy that conspiracy theory. I believe that the Indians genuinely believe that their best interests would be served by having a peaceful Sri Lanka as their southern neighbour. To be sure, it is also in India's best interest to see to it that the Tamil population in Sri Lanka is relatively happy with whatever arrangement is ultimately worked out, so that the Tamil population of the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu will also be happy.

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS:

Whatever alternative is finally agreed upon to end the fighting in Sri Lanka, there is no question but that it will include devolution of some political power to some Tamil region/s. The questions are: How much political power, and to which region or regions?

People who talk about devolution of power, usually talk about it in terms of 'giving the Tamils something'. Very few people talk about all of the people who live in Sri Lanka sharing in that devolution. Sri Thillaiampalam, head of the Boston based Tamil Eelam Association of America (one of the most moderate of Tamil expatriate organizations), on the other hand, has been saying for years that federalism, in order to work, has to be for everyone – not just for Tamils. He supported President Jayawardena's Provincial Council scheme as a first step toward federalism, precisely because it proposed a devolution of political power to **all** provinces. But he is relatively isolated in that approach. While I agree with his assessment, I'm afraid most people who think about the problem, think only about devolution to Tamil areas. Hopefully, that will eventually change.

One can envision thinking about devolution as points along a continuum, depending on how much power is actually transferred to a governmental unit at a level lower than the central government. At one end would be a unitary state with virtually no local autonomy, except perhaps for garbage collection and the like. At the other extreme end of the continuum would be a completely independent Tamil Eelam, with no ties whatever between it and what was left of Sri

Lanka. In between range a virtually endless variety of options. The key factors are 1) how much power is actually devolved, and 2) the size of the unit being given power. With regard to 'how much power. . .', questions which have to be resolved include, for example: Is the unit going to have its own police force? If yes, who will have control over hiring and firing of the police? In what language is the business of government and the courts to be conducted? Will the unit be allowed to have its own court system? If yes, who will appoint the judges? Who will decide questions of who can own land? How much power will the central government have over the operation of the government in the unit? If the center doesn't like the government of the unit, can it remove that government? Under what conditions? Will there be conditions under which the center will be allowed to rule the unit directly? What will be the language of instruction in the schools? Will it be allowed to have diplomatic representation? Will it have a separate currency? Will it be tied economically in some way to the central government? These and thousands of questions like these will have to be agreed upon before any settlement is reached. How they are decided will determine just how much devolution of power actually will have taken place.

Figure 1 is a representation of some of the possible points along the continuum that have been tried in various places around the world. In no way is this presentation made to limit the possibilities. Rather it is meant to highlight some of the possible alternatives.

At the extreme right is the total unitary system, with all decisions being made by the central government. Actually, Sri Lanka, prior to the enactment of the Provincial Council scheme, came pretty close to that model.

At a point slightly to the left of that, one can imagine a very moderate devolution of the kind the United Kingdom grants to Scotland, Wales, England and North Ireland. Essentially it is a symbolic devolution with most real power still being held by the center.

A little more to the left, on the continuum, one can see a point envisioned by the Regional Development Council scheme. Unfortunately that scheme was never fully implemented in Sri Lanka. There is a strong body of opinion which argues that had the Regional Development Councils ever been properly implemented Tamil discontent would have been nipped in the bud, most Tamils would have supported it, and the young militant groups would have dissipated. It never was, however, because it gave too much power to the Regions, for the Sinhalese extremists, and it didn't give enough for the Tamil extremists. Now that a decade of civil war, death and hatred have ensued, it will be harder than ever to get agreement on where to draw the line. It is doubtful that the Tamils would now settle for this point on the continuum (even if the Tigers are completely crushed, the other Tamil militant groups are not likely to settle for that little real power.)

The modest devolution of power envisioned in the Provincial Council scheme was acceptable enough to the Sinhalese to have passed Parliament (just barely) in the form of a constitutional amendment, but it was unacceptable enough to Sinhalese extremists to have sparked the J.V.P. (Janatha Vimukti Peramuna) uprising in 1989. Even though the J.V.P. were finally crushed, there are still a great many Sinhalese who believe that the Provincial Council went too far, and gave away too much. It must be noted here that it passed a parliament where the ruling United National Party (U.N.P.), had more than the necessary 2/3 majority to get constitutional amendments through. The U.N.P. does not now enjoy such a majority, nor is it likely that any party will again for some time.

Thus, in real political terms, and constitutionally, Provincial Councils, may be as far to the left on the continuum that any Sinhalese Government will be able to go for the foreseeable future. That need not be all that bad, however, since the amendment that enabled Provincial Councils to come into existence didn't really spell out in great detail just how much power actually was to be devolved. Thus some creative interpretation on the part of negotiators could in fact grant considerably more power to the Provincial Councils than they now possess. That kind of devolution – to the left on the continuum, by a notch – would probably be acceptable to many of the Tamil moderates and indeed, might even be accepted by some of the militant groups like the EPRLF. I say that because the EPRLF and some of the other militant groups were willing to work within the framework of the Provincial Councils before, but said all along that there would have to be some real devolution of power if they were to work. That devolution still has not occurred, to the best of my knowledge.

If increased power to the Provincial Councils were to be forthcoming that would mean a *de facto* federalism, which Sinhalese extremists wouldn't like, but which would not need another constitutional amendment, and could therefore conceivably be implemented fairly easily. Given a chance to work, if, over time, it does actually work, the Sinhalese 'right' might come to recognize that Sri Lanka hadn't been torn apart after all, and that 'federalism' was less painful in practice than they had thought it would be. All of this, of course is based on the premises that a) the government would be willing to make those real concessions, and then be willing and able to implement the concessions it had made, b) significant segments of the Tamil community would go along with the settlement reached. Both of these premises remain to be seen.

Next on the continuum, there are various forms of *de jure* federalism. One of the more limited forms is that which prevails in India. There the individual states do have significant power, but the central government does have the right to suspend the state government and to rule from the center. In the event of a conflict between the center and the states, it is the center that prevails. This is the most devolution of power the Indian government wants to see the Tamils get in Sri Lanka. They fear that if Sri Lanka gives its Tamils too much more power than India gives its states, the Indian states are going to demand of India what the Sri Lankan Tamils got from their government.

In the American model the center also has considerable power, but according to the 10th amendment to the constitution, 'powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively. . .'. It is unthinkable, in the American model, that the center would rule in a dispute with any of the states, yet that is exactly what did happen for a time immediately after the Civil War. Still, that is an extreme example. It is not the same kind of 'rule from the center' that India regularly resorts to.

In their effort to keep Quebec in the union, the Canadians are experimenting with proposals (not yet implemented) for a looser federation than either exists now, and one that is even looser than the American version. Whether that can succeed remains to be seen.

Switzerland, of course is not a federation, but rather a confederation. As far as I know it is the only example of one that has successfully survived. It has four separate official languages,

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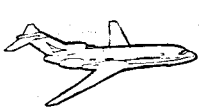

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very autonomous canton governments that have considerable power, and yet for reasons which may be peculiar to the history of that country, it has survived. Indeed, it is the only successful multilingual state which political scientists would describe as a nation: a place with a common identity and a common sense of 'we-ness'. Political scientists used to describe Belgium and Canada that way also, but they no longer do. Whether Canada can become like Switzerland and transform itself into a functioning confederation remains to be seen.

What the European Community will actually become is anybody's guess, at the moment. Interestingly, in a world filled with centrifugal forces, it is the only political unit experiencing centripetal pressures. Again accidents of history may account for that. For 50 years Europe was faced with the threat of Soviet military might in the East, and American economic might in the West. To preserve itself it had to unite. (There is, after all, strength in unity.) How much unity will ultimately emerge now that both the Soviet and the American threats are perceived to have receded, remains to be seen. But whatever it will become in the distant future, as of January 1, 1993 it will become something less than a confederation.

The Commonwealth of Independent States is too new to say much about. Clearly it is viewed as something considerably less than a confederation, and clearly too, centrifugal forces seem to be driving the parts further away from each other. At least the bigger ones want their own armies, their own currencies, their own foreign relations. Historically, units that have not had a strong central authority (with the exception of Switzerland) have gone in their own directions.

Organizations like the British Commonwealth of Nations, made up of former British colonies, or the Organization of American States, made up of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, which have historically been associated with the United States are really nothing more than organizations of totally independent countries which have historically been associated in some way. The U.S. probably has more influence within the OAS than the British actually do within the Commonwealth, but still both provide some services for the weaker countries associated with them. To some degree, the richer countries in the association provide aid to the poorer ones.

At the extreme left of the continuum is 'total independence'. One state can be totally independent of another, but cannot be totally independent of all other states. That is, Bulgaria and Burma may be totally independent of each other, but the only way that Bulgaria could become independent of Eastern Europe, and particularly of the former Soviet Union was to become increasingly dependent upon Germany and Western Europe. The weaker a country, the more dependent upon some other country it has to be. [See Marshall R. Singer, *Weaker States in a World of Powers: The Dynamics of International Relationships,* Free Press, New York, 1972]. If Tamil Eelam ever came into existence, the question is not whether it could be completely independent (economically, educationally, militarily and many other ways), but whether it would become more dependent upon Sri Lanka or India.

At any rate, this is the range of the **theoretically** possible. The LTTE and other Tamil extremists want the Tamils to achieve a settlement as far to the left on the continuum as they can. The problem for the Tamils is that they are not in any position either militarily or politically to impose a solution to their liking. They may want one as far to the left as they can get on the continuum, but I submit, given the fact that they are so splintered both politically and militarily, they would be lucky if they could get the Sinhalese to give them some very meaningful devolution of power within the framework of the Provincial Councils.

The Sinhalese extremists, on the other hand, want the government to maintain a position as far to the right on the continuum as possible. Their preference, of course, would be to give the Tamils no concessions whatever. While the government may be in a position to badly damage the LTTE, as I have said before, I don't believe that they will be able to totally destroy the LTTE. Even if they could, however, they still would have the other militant groups to contend with. Making no concessions at all to local autonomy for the Tamils just is not within the realm of the possible.

Where does that leave us? The war could drag on for many more years, very inconclusively. No one wants that. It is clear that some devolution of power is going to eventually have to take place. Given political realities it will probably come out somewhere between 'Modest Devolution' and 'Significant Devolution'. If my analysis is correct, it seems to me that all parties would benefit by starting from the possible and negotiating as specific an agreement as they can get, using the Provincial Council format which is already in place. The Tamils are simply not going to get anything too much further to the left, and the Sinhalese are not going to get peace with anything too much further to the right. If both sides can come to accept that reality, then maybe some meaningful negotiations could get under way to get a specific agreement. Whatever is finally agreed to, however, must be implemented. If it is not, the fighting will continue indefinitely.

As to the question of which size unit power should be devolved to, there is no question that the Sinhalese missed a golden opportunity in not implementing the Regional Development Councils Scheme. But they did miss it. The Provincial level could work everywhere but in the East. I suspect the longer the Tamils demand that all of the Eastern Province be merged with the North, the longer a solution will be delayed. It seems to me not impossible to come up with a solution that unites the Tamil areas of the East with the Northern Province, and creates a Muslim Province in the East. It may not be possible for them all to be contiguous, but so be it. The Sinhalese areas could probably best be joined with the provinces they adjoin. Trincomalee is, of course, one of the problems. Both sides want it. It seems to me one of the only solutions for that, which might work, would be to declare it a separate unit, with the same powers devolved to it as to the other provinces. But these are details best left to the parties to work out. The point of this paper has been to review all of the theoretical alternatives and then to dismiss those which will remain only in the realm of theory. If the combatants want a solution they will have to abandon theory and deal with reality. The sooner they do that the sooner there will be a solution.

THE CHARLATAN

'Kanamayil ada kandiruntha vankoli, thanum athuvahap pavithu, thanum than pollach chirahai virithadinatpol, kallathan katta kavi.'

A turkey-cock that came across a peacock dancing in blissful ecstasy the dawning hours of his jungle habitat with his brilliantly lustrous plumage spread out like a fan, desired very much to express himself in the same beautiful and rapturous manner. A poet inspired by this sight, conveyed the truth in an immortal verse, that the song of an illiterate is akin to a turkey that tried to imitate the dance of a jungle peacock.

Richards Karunairajan.

Harassment & Abuse of Journalists – Asia Watch Urges Probe

The US-based Human Rights Agency, 'Asia Watch' in an open memorandum, has called on the Sri Lankan Government to amend or repeal all Laws and Emergency Regulations imposed on the Press and investigate all claims of harassment and abuse of journalists.

The memorandum containing a series of recommendations based on the recent comprehensive Asia Watch report, 'Human Rights Accountability in Sri Lanka', has also touched on 'Threats to Freedom of Expression', 'The Human Rights Task Force', 'Commission of Inquiry into the Involuntary Removal of Persons', 'Special Task Force on Human Rights', 'The Kokkadicholai Commission', 'The need to Review Emergency Regulations', The need to Review Police Structures and Procedures', 'The need to Protect Fundamental Rights Petitioners' and the 'Conclusions' in the Sri Lanka context.

Political opposition, the memorandum went on to say, should be granted equal access to the media under exclusive State control, such as the Television and the Radio while dispensing with the allocation of newsprint and advertising by the Government on the basis of political criteria.

'Asia Watch' urges the Sri Lankan government to amend or repeal all Laws and Emergency regulations which exceed the narrow restrictions permitted by international standards on Freedom of Expression and the Press. Free expression of dissenting views and access to information on Human Rights violations by State forces, as well as on efforts to correct these abuses, is essential to re-establish public faith in the principle of accountability', it pointed out.

Citing instances over the perceived unreliability of the Sri Lankan media and its lack of any real independence, the communique alleged, 'The State controlled electronic media can be, and is, used to provide generous opportunity for coverage of the government's position while denying air-time to the government's opponents'.

During the impeachment of President Premadasa in August 1991, the memo went on to claim, 'the President was given ninety minutes of television time to express his position on the matter but the resolution's sponsors were given no air time at all. Indeed, the Minister of State for Information, A.J. Ranasinghe, was widely reported to have said that the dissidents could not 'of course' expect coverage on the State controlled media, it added.

'There are also pressures on newspapers and journals that are not government owned. The government has power over the allocation of newsprint, and newspapers are dependent on government advertising', it adds.

After publicity was given to opposition viewpoints or opinions critical of the Government were aired, the document pointed out, journalists were physically threatened, dismissed or demoted, legal action was taken against the papers, printing presses were closed and one of the most recent instances was the 'Aththa'.

'More recently, in April when a series of articles appeared in the Sri Lankan Press featuring allegations by former Police officer DIG Premadasa Udugampola that the Government was involved in the death – squad killings of hundreds of suspected JVP and Opposition party members – charges were brought against the Editor and publisher under Article 26 of the Emergency Regulations for 'causing hostility, ill-will and contempt of the Government' the document claimed.

Commenting on the proposed Media Commission Bill, it added that the May '92 Report of Asia Watch expressed concern over restrictions contained in a draft proposal wider than those acceptable at international standards.

'The Sri Lanka Government should investigate all claims of harassment and abuse of journalists by members of its forces and pursue disciplinary or criminal actions against the offending parties' it urged the Government.

Referring to petitioners on Human Rights, it calls on the Government to execute severe disciplinary or criminal action against anyone attempting to harass fundamental rights petitioners or their lawyers, or otherwise to obstruct the proceedings of a fundamental rights case or impede the implementation of the Court's instructions.

The Emergency Laws, which even Government officials admit are generally unnecessary, it claimed, should be repealed as they virtually invite abuse. 'Extensions of the dates covered by the Indemnity Act of 1989 are also dangerous because Parliament can be expected once again to extend the deadline' the memorandum explained.

Man Accused of Passport Forgery Dies in Canadian Jail

Mystery shrouds the death of a Sri Lankan man in a Canadian jail where he was held on passport-forgery charges.

Santhakumar Kumarasamy, 40, died of an apparent heart attack he suffered at Toronto's Don Jail. But the police version of the sudden death conflicts with that of some inmates.

Metro police, in a brief news release, said Kumarasamy 'was having difficulty breathing in his cell'. Four prison inmates say that prison guards had returned Kumarasamy to his cell about 9.30 at night, after he had complained of chest pains and trouble with breathing.

Soon after he was returned to his cell, Kumarasamy had told his cellmate that he was told he was 'okay', but he quickly started yelling with pain. It took between 15 and 20 minutes for a guard and two nurses to show up. They 'walked' the man out of his cell. They virtually dragged him out, inmates said. Staff sergeant Jim Carleton of the Toronto Metro Police said Kumarasamy was taken from his cell and treated by prison medical staff. An ambulance then took him to hospital, he added.

On June 22, 1990, Kumarasamy had been sentenced to three-and-a-half years in jail, convicted of counterfeiting over a thousand Canadian passports, visas and other travel documents. Pending an appeal, he was freed on bail.

Last march, he and another Sri Lankan were arrested and charged on six new counts of forgery, after a police swoop on a Toronto apartment where a sophisticated forgery of Sri Lankan and Canadian passports was in operation. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said the documents were 'high-quality forgeries'.

A printer in Sri Lanka, Kumarasamy came to Canada as a refugee in 1987. A new trial date for his hearing was due the day after he died. Kumarasamy's lawyer, Howard Rubel, who visited him in prison a week earlier, said he doesn't think his client had health problems.

At the time of Kumarasamy's 1990 conviction, prosecutors said it was the first time on record that a Canadian court had convicted anyone of running a passport forgery operation. Forged travel documents have a purchase value of US $25,000 and find a ready international market.

A Critique of Tigers' Claims

by Ram Manikkalingam, MIT, USA

The Tigers have posed as the saviour-leaders of the Tamils for more than a decade. In doing so, they have succeeded in dominating Tamil politics and positioning themselves at the centre of Sri Lankan politics. While the Tiger ability to secure power through coercion has played a critical role in their political success, they have also been bolstered by a series of myths and arguments. The myths have ranged from the ridiculous – 'only Prabakaran knows the answer' – to the fantastic – 'thousands of Tamil youth are flocking to join the Tigers.' The Tiger myths are both easier and harder to counter than pro-Tiger arguments. They are easier to counter because as myths they are sustained by blind faith rather than reason and have no basis in reality. But this also makes them harder to counter because Tigerists who adhere to these myths are not open to reason. Despite their importance, this paper does not address the Tiger myths. Instead, it focusses on three important pro-Tiger arguments that recur in any discussion about the Tigers.

The first is that the Tigers are the sole representatives of the Tamil people. This argument is usually made by Tigerists (Tamil ultra-nationalists) and is easily countered, whereupon the second defence of the Tigers is invoked. This views their brutality as a response to an uncompromising and unchanging Sinhala nationalism. Ironically, this second pro-Tiger argument is also a critique. Because laying the blame for Tiger excesses on Sinhala nationalism, is also an implicit acknowledgement of Tiger brutality. But there is a much deeper critique of the Tigers, which sees their brutality as the consequence of an attempt to create a new Tamil identity, devoid of freedom and diversity. The final defence of the Tigers, which is shared even by Tamils (whether leftists, liberals or nationalists) who are critical of the Tigers, sees the Tigers, despite their viciousness, as the last defence against the outright destruction of the Tamil people.

This pro-Tiger argument claims that, given the absence of an alternative, a political defeat of the Tigers could jeopardise the possibility of Tamils achieving their rights and may even lead to the complete defeat of the Tamil struggle. This fear is reasonable and deserves careful consideration because it captures the sentiments of Tamil nationalists who are critical of the Tigers, and many secular democratic Sri Lankans, who support the Tamil struggle. However, a nascent alternative does exist. And instead of bemoaning the supposed absence of one, Tamils (leftists, liberals and nationalists) should help strengthen it.

The Sole Representative

The Tigers claim to be the sole representatives of the Tamil people. This claim is apparent from any brief examination of Tiger negotiating tactics at peace talks during the last five years. Except for the Thimpu talks, when the Tigers participated along with the other Tamil political parties and organisations, they have always resented the participation of non-Tiger Tamil parties. For example, subsequent to the Indo-Lanka Agreement, a crucial point of disagreement between the Indian government and the Tigers was the Tiger desire to have absolute (not just majority) control of the interim council in the Northeast. What is the moral and political basis for this position taken by the Tigers?

Morally, the claim to sole representative status is difficult to sustain for any organisation. The notion that one group or organisation can represent the interests of a diverse community usually fails to stand up to scrutiny from the basic perspective of individual rights and political freedoms. Undoubtedly, ties of ethnicity, class or gender may serve as a basis for unity against a common oppression. But this is a basis for negative unity and does not instantly translate into the positive unity of a common political program. Nevertheless, it may be crucial for an oppressed community to forge a temporary consensus in order to confront a common oppressor. Such a consensus may evolve into delegating the role of negotiators to a particular group of individuals or an organisation. They may then, for reasons of political expediency, be called the sole representatives of a community. This status is granted to an organisation to counter the attempts to exploit differences of opinion amongst the dominated by the dominant power. The sole representative status is not granted to an organisation to enable it to maintain control over the community that it represents. The sole representative is not the organisation or group that represents the only opinion, the majority opinion, or the opinion with the greatest armed backing. But rather, it represents the opinion that is the outcome of a process of negotiations between diverse groups within a community who share a common experience of discrimination.

In general, the claim to sole representative status is a subtle issue and there is no single rule that can decide its moral and political legitimacy. For example, the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) claims to be the sole representative of the Palestinian people. While this claim is difficult to assess, it is plausible, given the widespread support the PLO enjoys both in the Occupied Territories and among the Arabs in Israel. But the extent of support alone cannot be the basis on which the status of sole representative is decided. Rather, in the case of the PLO, their claim is legitimised by the Palestinian National Council, which is the parliament in exile of the Palestinian people. Here, debate is conducted in an open and democratic manner. And the executive committee of the PLO is then chosen by elections and negotiations amongst the different organisations that the PLO comprises, and is not dependent on the whims of an absolute leader.

Resolving Differences

Clearly, the Tigers do not satisfy any of the moral or political criteria to qualify as the sole representatives of the Tamil people. Not only are the Tigers a politically closed organisation, no one outside (or, for that matter, even inside) the organisation is aware of how political decisions are made. (Here 'political' should be emphasised, because it is understandable to claim that 'military' decisions and plans should be secret). Worse, the traditional Tiger method of resolving political differences is to physically eliminate them. In 1984 they killed Sundaram, a dissident who left the Tigers. In 1985, they killed Sri Sabaratnam, the TELO leader. In August 1987, shortly after the Peace Accord, they killed Vasudeva and other senior PLOTE leaders. In July 1989, they killed the TULF leaders, Amirthalingam and Yogeswaran, while negotiating with them. In September 1989, they killed Rajini Thiranagama for writing the book 'Broken Palmyrah.' And in June 1990, they killed the leader of the EPRLF, Pathmanaba, and several others. Given this history of violent suppression of alternative opinions, it would be difficult for the Tigers to claim that they have sought to build a democratic consensus through nego-

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tiations with other Tamil political parties. Thus, any basis to the legitimacy of their claim to be the sole representative of the Tamil people must lie elsewhere.

The other basis on which the Tigers seek to stake their claim is their contribution to the armed struggle for Tamil liberation. The Tigers contend that the other Tamil political organisations seek to enjoy the fruits of peace without having paid the price of war. As the militarily strongest of the Tamil organisations, and as the only organisation to have consistently fought the Sri Lankan government (though this is debatable given their alliance with the UNP regime from 1989-1990), the Tigers feel they have a right to be the sole representative of the Tamil people. There are three objections to the Tiger claim to this status, even if one accepts their superior military performance as a reasonable basis on which to make it.

Three Objections

First, accepting the Tiger claim that since they have fought the longest and the hardest they should represent the Tamil people, doesn't mean having to accept the claim that they should be the sole representative of the Tamil people. The fact that the Tigers have the strongest military capacity gives them a pragmatic claim to representation (since if they so desire they can spoil the chances of peace). And the fact that they have fought the hardest may give them political legitimacy among the Tamil people. But both these factors, at best, give the Tigers a basis from which to claim the status of the main representative (not sole representative) of the Tamil people.

Second, if the basis for representing the Tamil people were derived from the extent to which an armed organisation forcibly extracted concessions from the Sri Lankan state, then the Tigers might have to make way for the IPKF! Any observer of the Northeast in mid 1987 was aware that it was only the threat of intervention from India that thwarted a UNP government defeat of the Tigers and conquest of Jaffna. This is clearly unacceptable and thus casts serious doubt on the very basis for Tiger claims to legitimacy.

Finally, although the Tigers may have been the most successful military organisation, this does not mean that they will be either the best representatives of the Tamil people or the best negotiators at the negotiating table. Their skill at warring does not automatically translate into skill as politicians and administrators. Negotiations towards the resolution of any conflict require patience and compromise. While the Tigers have shown patience in war, they have only shown impatience with peace. An uncompromising stance might make a successful warrior, but it is inimical to a successful negotiator. Thus, the Tigers have demonstrated that they can wage war, but in doing so, they have also demonstrated that they will not pursue peace.

Response to Sinhala Nationalism

The second pro-Tiger argument is that the Tigers are a response to Sinhala nationalism. The claim is that while their tactics may be cruel and brutal, they are justifiable, given the nature of Sinhala nationalism. The politics of Tamil nationalism undoubtedly began as a response to Sinhala nationalism. The Tamils suffered a history of discrimination, violence and marginalisation at the hands of successive Sri Lankan governments. As Sinhala nationalism was both manipulated from above and mobilised from below, Tamils became increasingly alienated from the Sri Lankan polity. They used different political means to counter the oppressive politics of Sinhala nationalism. A series of failed pacts ultimately led to disillusionment and the pursuit of an armed struggle for 'national liberation'.

The initial resort to armed struggle by the Tamils may have been unavoidable, given the refusal of the Sri Lankan state to compromise. However, the subsequent direction taken by the Tamil militant struggle, under the domination of the Tigers, was very much a consequence of internal Tamil politics. Clearly, Sinhala nationalism provided the political context in which Tamil nationalism could become Tigerism. Nevertheless, the logic of a response to Sinhala nationalism, alone, fails to explain or justify Tiger excesses during the past decade. For example, Tigerists cannot blame Sinhala nationalism for the Tiger decision to murder rival Tamil political leaders, and student and human rights activists.

Sinhala nationalism did not compel the Tigers to kill Rajini Thiranagama or Vijitharan. The expulsion of thousands of Muslims from the Northeast and the massacres of hundreds of others is not part of a natural Tamil nationalist response to the oppression of the Sri Lankan state. The opposition expressed by the Tamils of Mannar to the expulsion of Muslims, and the recent Tiger killings of Tamils who were protecting Muslims, suggests that many Tamils see this aspect of Tiger behaviour as brutal and inhuman, and having no relevance to the Tamil struggle for liberation. However, there obviously are Tigerists who claim that all individuals, groups or communities who were killed, massacred or expelled by the Tigers were traitors to the Tamil cause.

They argue that killing those who oppose the Tigers is a necessary aspect of the struggle for liberation from Sinhala oppression. The Tigers usually define as traitors and then execute individuals who have significant sympathy and support among the Tamil people. And they are killed precisely for that reason. If the condemnation of these individuals as traitors is to make any sense, then the word traitor must be redefined to mean anyone opposed to the Tigers. This implies that any Tamil who is not a Tigerist is a traitor. The problem with this position, leaving aside its callousness, is that it is really a variation of the sole representative argument, which was earlier shown to be untenable.

Regardless of how vicious or uncompromising Sinhala nationalism may be, Tamil nationalism need not have adopted those very same characteristics. At the very least, the Tamil nationalist movement should have and could have maintained a semblance of internal democracy. Instead of being part of a reasonable response to the domination of Sinhala nationalism, actions by the Tigers are a reflection of the Tiger attempt to create a Tamil identity devoid of freedom, diversity and autonomy. Thus, the Tiger response is just that; a Tiger response. It is not a Tamil response and it cannot be morally or politically justified as a weapon against Sinhala nationalism.

The Last Defence

The most plausible argument for the Tigers today is that they are the last defence of an oppressed Tamil nation against Sinhala domination. This argument is put forward not only by Tigerists, but also by Tamils who have strongly condemned Tiger tactics and are opposed to their narrow political agenda. There are several problems with the notion that the Tigers are playing a positive role by acting as a buffer between the Tamil people and the Sri Lankan state.

The impression that the Tigers are protecting the Tamil people is blatantly false. The most obvious example again, is mid-1987, when they were retreating before the Sri Lankan army and were ultimately protected by the intervention of India. More notoriously, the Tigers have been known to setup ambushes and landmines in

populated areas in order to invite retaliation on Tamil civilians by the armed forces (the Sri Lankan armed forces have, of course, obliged them) and increase their 'support'. Finally, they are the only active Tamil organisation in the Northeast precisely because they have banned or destroyed all others. Still, Tamil nationalists feel compelled to support or, at least, justify Tiger actions because they fear a Tiger defeat 'will set the Tamil struggle back one more generation'.

Sinhala Monolith?

This sentiment can be traced to a view about Sinhala politics, shared by many Tamil nationalists, that 'all Sinhala regimes are the same'. They claim that as far as the Tamils are concerned the UNP is the same as the SLFP, which is the same as the JVP, which is the same as the LSSP, and so on. Furthermore, they argue that the Sri Lankan state's willingness to give concessions to the Tamils is usually the consequence of a military or political setback, rather than the result of a genuine change of attitude in favour of a political settlement.

This reading of Sinhala politics ignores the diversity of forces encompassed within it and the extent to which Sinhala politics, itself, is up for grabs. For example, it fails to adequately explain the most important recent development in Sinhala politics – the defeat of the JVP. Here, the most virulent element of Sinhala nationalism was defeated politically and militarily. This, in fact, is in stark contrast to Tamil politics, where the most virulent exponent of Tamil nationalism – the Tigers – succeeded in defeating everybody else. Moreover, today's baseline for political negotiations with the Tamils is not no rights, but rather the measure of regional autonomy constitutionalised in the Thirteenth Amendment. It is also important to note that even at the height of anti-Tamil violence in the South of Sri Lanka – July 1983 – there has always been a vocal, albeit small, group of Sinhala leftists and liberals who have consistently supported Tamil rights and opposed Sinhala chauvinism.

Still, Tamil nationalists counter, there is no concrete sign of these changes in Sinhala nationalism. The Premadasa regime continues to dilly-dally on negotiations and has failed to put forward a set of proposals to resolve the conflict. They argue that this regime has shown the same reluctance to pursue a political solution as the previous UNP regimes. This is true, but it obscures an important distinction between the political strategy of the current UNP regime and the previous UNP regime, on the one hand, and the current UNP regime and the Tigers, on the other. The Jayawardene regime sought to consolidate power by achieving a military victory over the Tamils. This was the main goal of 'Operation Liberation' in mid 1987. The Premadasa regime, however, would prefer to consolidate its power by resolving the conflict, politically. If the conflict is resolved, it would free up billions of rupees from the defence budget for expenditure on economic infra-structure. Aid would flow in from the West with little or no strictures. The Northeast would revive economically from the end of the war and Sri Lanka would enter a period of rapid economic growth. Premadasa could then portray himself (not inaccurately) as the leader who brought peace and prosperity to Sri Lanka.

Tamil or Tigerist?

If this is so, why doesn't Premadasa put forward an extensive package of devolution that can be accepted by the majority of the Tamil people? The answer, of course, is that he lacks the political courage to stand up to the Sinhala nationalists. A political solution is a desideratum for the Premadasa regime, but not a necessity. The Premadasa regime can survive without resolving the conflict in the Northeast because the war does not threaten its power at the centre, unlike the JVP rebellion which did. Although the current regime doesn't need to resolve this conflict in order to survive, it would prefer to do so.

But, the Tigers need the conflict in order to survive. The very survival of Tigerism depends on the ability of the Tigers to ensure that the Tamil people are shut off from the possibility of achieving a political settlement. They fear that with the democratic space that peace would inevitably bring, they would lose their domination over Tamil politics. While the changes in Sinhala nationalism are real, they are not discernible, because just at the moment when Sinhala nationalism has been weakened, Tamil nationalism has taken the Tigerist turn and has veered away from the course of a negotiated settlement. But, Tamil nationalists counter, even if the Tigers don't want a political solution, they are our only alternative. If they are defeated there is nobody else.

Invoking the absence of an alternative as a plausible reason to support the Tigers is either the last resort of a Tigerist defence, or the first (and only) concession made to the Tigers by those Tamils, whether leftists, liberals or nationalists, who support a just settlement to the conflict. At this juncture what distinguishes a Tigerist from a Tamil (liberal, leftist or nationalist) is the next step. A Tigerist will use the absence of an alternative as an excuse to support the Tigers. A Tamil (liberal, leftist or nationalist) will be impelled by the absence of an alternative to create one.

The Alternative

The alternative to Tigerism can be created by drawing from four different arenas of Tamil politics. The first and most important is the Northeast, where there are numerous civilian and community organisations that have been working for the past decade. Student organisations, women's organisations, citizen's committees, refugee and rehabilitation organisations, the church and other groups have worked silently and tirelessly for years to pick up the pieces after the destruction wrought by the war. These groups have been silenced by the Tigers, who have either banned them or prevented them from working independently. Their independent voices represent the genuine will of the Tamil people, but they cannot coordinate politically in the presence of the armed threat of the Tigers. A Tiger defeat will liberate them from their enforced silence.

The next arena is in Colombo, where many individuals and members of other Tamil organisations have fled, fearing Tiger threats of death and imprisonment. Despite the lack of cooperation of the UNP regime, these organisations and political parties are seeking support for a political solution. Outside Sri Lanka, where the Tigers cannot coerce the Tamil people with impunity, independent Tamil voices are proliferating. Today, independent Tamil papers outnumber those put out by pro-Tiger elements, as support wanes for the Tigers among the exile Tamil community. Opposition, albeit passive, to the Tigers in North America and Europe has become more the norm than the exception.

The final arena is within the Tigers, themselves. No organisation, however totalitarian, can suppress all forms of internal disaffection. Silent opposition to Tigerism must exist within the Tigers as well. This nascent dissension within the Tigers might result in a change in the political perspective of the leadership. Though this is extremely unlikely. It is more probable that if Tigerism is to reform, itself, the leadership will have to be overthrown and give way to a more pragmatic and democratic politics. The inability to translate this multi-layered opposition into a concrete political program for

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READERS FORUM

KAYTS BLAST AND THE AFTERMATH

I had the opportunity of being in Sri Lanka during the last two weeks in August and to witness what could very well turn out to be one of the best planned conspiracies that has been perpetrated in Sri Lanka.

The late Major General Kobbekaduwa's untimely death is no doubt a major loss that the people of the country and the Government have suffered in recent history. However the stories that are being calculatedly circulated regarding the deaths as well as the clockwork nature of the events in the immediate aftermath do tend to indicate that they had been well planned and well implemented.

It is accordingly imperative to look objectively at who were the beneficiaries and losers from his death. One of the most relevant facts in this connection was the interview widely reported in the International media also, which was given by the General a few weeks before his death on the whole question of the war. Of equal importance was that he was the only top level military leader who had been able to establish a dialogue with all the Tamil militant groups. The late General's statements at the interview had included that:

i. It is imperative that a political solution be found for the conflict and that the task he was carrying out was to make the LTTE adequately weak to make them want to come to talks.

ii. The situation faced by the LTTE in Tamil Nadu and the consequent reduction in supply routes and the like as well as the progress made on the ground by the Sri Lankan forces had made LTTE militarily weak enough to agree to talks sooner rather than later.

iii. Any further advances into LTTE controlled areas would be possible, but retaining them for longer periods of time would be quite costly in terms of life and resources both military and civilian.

The above was one of the most objective positions publicly taken up by any of the top military officers and was a far cry from the hollow, deceptive and downright unrealistic promises given by a number of other top Defence officials and politicians who had been previously in charge of the war.

The late General Kobbekaduwa's announcements were a good omen for an imminent commencement of talks between the LTTE and Government. This was in the best interests of the people at large who were losing so many of their loved ones in a never ending and unnecessary war. It would have also enabled the already limited funds to be deployed on the country's development efforts rather than on wasteful military expenditure.

This was clearly the intention of the Sri Lankan President in calling such talks as soon as he assumed office. Accordingly the Government would have been the greatest beneficiary of the late General achieving the objectives explained by him at the time of the press interview referred to above.

The greatest losers from such an eventuality include the local and foreign agents of arms dealers and other suppliers to the war efforts on both sides; the Regional vested interests who sought the destabilisation of Sri Lanka by promoting the conflict initially and are attempting to perpetuate the war by pushing for totally unacceptable solutions; and International vested interests who added fuel to the fire through propaganda and supplies with a view to maintaining Sri Lanka's weakness thereby prompting perpetual dependence.

The possibility of commencing negotiations aimed at a political solution has been at least temporarily aborted by the Kayts events and the aftermath. The otherwise divided opposition has found new mud to throw in the form of wild allegations and found a rope to cling to in the form of the conspicuous return of Indian involvement in the local political scene.

On the military side, the LTTE has been made to look strong and are thereby more inclined to shun talks. The Government is being increasingly pressurized to continue the war allegedly as a sign of respect for the dead officers! There is also a campaign to say that the loss of the number of experienced men must be compensated for by purchasing larger amounts and more and more sophisticated arms!!

In the circumstances there appears to be grounds to believe that the death of the late General Kobbekaduwa and other officers at Kayts could very well have been a conspiracy aimed at preventing a possible political solution and the perpetuation of the meaningless war.

It is hoped that the Sri Lankan Government would accordingly appoint a commission as soon as is practicable to investigate possible local, regional and International involvement in such a conspiracy.

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N. RAM'S INTERVIEW

When I completed the interview which the editor of *Frontline*, N. Ram gave to the *Sunday Island* (republished in the September issue of *Tamil Times*), I could only think of what Harry Truman said about the ability of Richard Nixon to tell lies. Truman noted, 'He can lie out of both sides of his mouth at the same time, and if he ever caught himself telling the truth, he'd lie just to keep his hand in'. Truman's quote seems to fit the editor of *Frontline* as well.

Regarding his current status on the Eelam issue, Ram has observed, 'Indian policy has become somewhat inert or inactive. So there is no question of my playing a role. Because I don't play an independent role. It is part of a policy response'. Ram uses words like 'policy', 'assessment' and 'mistakes' euphemistically to hide the role initiated and played by the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the Indian counterpart of CIA and KGB. If Ram had stated openly on the failure of the RAW to infiltrate the LTTE (rather than referring to it passively as 'For one thing they were not accessible'), and his relationship with the RAW, I would have admired his courage and conviction. His antagonism to the LTTE is understandable, if one separates the kernel from the chaff. LTTE was (and still is) the only Tamil militant group which the RAW personnel could not manipulate to dance according to the whims of the Indian policy mandarins.

I am also amused by the comments of Ram, a refined analyst of events in India, on the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Factually speaking, the assassination trial has just started and verdict is yet to be delivered. But, according to Ram, 'It is absolutely clear that the order came from the top (of LTTE). To prove this Prabhakaran has to be brought to trial'. One should mark the words, 'absolutely clear'. Ram did not use cautious words such as 'apparent' or 'plausible', but has concluded as 'absolutely clear'. How did he arrive at this conclusion, without hearing all the evidences? Was he privy to some insider information? Or did Prabhakaran himself make a confession to Ram?

Lastly, I will not bet my money on Ram's prediction that 'Eelam is a

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Survey Reveals Plight of Children in Sri Lanka

One in every five children in Sri Lanka of the age group 10-14 years does not attend school because of child labour practices.

This has been revealed in a survey conducted recently by two eminent social workers.

Of 1.9 million Sri Lankan children under the age group of 10-14, about 250,000 are in the non-formal labour market, the researchers Messrs. K. Kuhathasan and L.B. Baddewala said.

Around 100,000 children between the ages of 10 and 14 are in refugee camps, the survey has revealed. Nearly 20,000 in the same age group are engaged in male prostitution and some 10,000 are estimated to be street children, according to the study.

It said that concern was mounting among social scientists as one in every fifth child of the age group of 10-14 years does not attend school as a result of child labour practices. The social cost and consequences of this tragedy may hinder the future development of the nation, as a large number of these children will be 'handicapped' for the rest of their lives. Children are found working in a variety of work situations and under varying conditions, according to the study.

It said about 28 per cent of female child labourers and 24 per cent of male child labourers are said to be working in the agricultural and plantation sectors.

According to the study the basic minimum age for employment in Sri Lanka is 14 as in other countries. However, in Sri Lanka, the employment of children below the age of 14 by their parents or guardian in light agricultural or horticultural work is permitted for less than one hour on any day before school. Light work is also permitted in any school or institution for training purposes, or in any dramatic performance. Persons under 14 shall not be employed in any public performance in which life or limbs are endangered. Persons under 18 years of age cannot be employed as a trimmer or stoker.

Until recently, children under 14 years could be employed in the plantation industry. But with the adoption of ILO Convention No. 10 by the Government in June this year, children under 14 cannot be employed even in the plantations. It can therefore be seen that children under the age of 14 cannot be employed in any trade. Although the fight against child labour will not be won solely through legislation, it certainly cannot be won without it. Child labour laws are essential to deal with the worst forms of child work. There is general agreement that child labour has to be abolished yet there is less unanimity on how this is to be achieved.

It is pointed out that encouraging student enrolments at the beginning of primary school is heavily retarded by heavy drop-outs in later years. According to Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act 'no person shall employ a child in such a manner as to prevent the child from attending school in accordance with the provisions of any written law'.

The study quotes: A survey conducted by the Ministry of Education which shows that even though, all children enrol in the primary cycle at some time, nearly 14% of those aged 5-14 years are out of school at any one time. About 4.2% of school enrolment are 'drop-outs' from grades 2-9. There are also wide disparities in attainment levels between the larger, better-funded schools and small remote schools or estate schools. The survey reveals that the problem of illiteracy is particularly high among children in urban slums and the plantation sector. These children either help their parents to look after the younger members of the family or are engaged in income-earning activities.

According to the study, about 28 per cent of female child labourers and 24 percent of male child labourers are said to be working in the agricultural and plantation sectors. They work under extremely difficult, abusive and exploitative conditions, in pesticide-soaked farms and plantations. More and more families are working as labourers on the farms.

★ 'DMK Has Lost Sympathy for Tigers'

The former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and leader of the DMK, M. Karunanidhi told a recent meeting of the party's executive committee that his party has lost all sympathy towards the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) after its complicity in the murder of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the murders of EPRLF leader Padmanabha and his colleagues became known.

However the DMK and the people of Tamil Nadu would never lose sympathy for the suffering Tamil people in Sri Lanka or the Tamil refugees now in India, he said.

Mr. Karunanidhi added that the DMK had never had any close links with the LTTE. Between 1983 and 1988, it was the Congress government at the centre and the MGR AIADMK state government in Tamil Nadu which had close connections with the Tigers and encouraged the LTTE by financial help to the tune of many crores of rupees and arms to the value of more than forty crores of rupees and setting up more than 30 training camps in the State.

Revealing details for the first time about the talks he had with several Sri Lankan Tamil militant groups in 1989 at the request of the central government both under Rajiv Gandhi and V.P. Singh, he said that the LTTE had refused to cooperate with other Tamil groups or parties to bring back normalcy to the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka.

The Central government of India has alerted the State government of Tamil Nadu that the LTTE was planning to storm the high security Chengalpattu sub-jail where all 26 accused facing trial in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case are held. In a communication, the Union Home Ministry has informed the Tamil Nadu State Secretary that a 15-member armed team of Tamil Tigers has been despatched from Jaffna as a last ditch effort to subvert the trial and secure the relese of the defendants, and has directed the State government to take all possible precautionary measures against any assault on the jail.

Continued from page 24

pipe-dream'. It is either a case of amnesia on the history of the Indian freedom struggle or a crafty response to tell the Sinhalese audience, what they want to hear.

Sachi Sri Kantha.

★ Commemorating Dr. N.M. Perera

Arrangements have been made to remember the former leader of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), the late Dr. N.M. Perera. The 'Dr. N.M. Perera Centre' was formally declared open by Dr. Gamini Corea, former Secretary General of UNCTAD. The Centre has been established by the N.M. Perera Memorial Trust Fund at the former residence of the late Dr. N.M. Perera at 106 Cotta Road which has been renamed Dr. N.M. Perera Mawatha. The objects of the Centre are (a) To foster and promote the ideals and principles of socialism with which the late Dr. N.M. Perera identified himself and for

Continued on page 29

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MATRIMONIAL

Brother *seeks fair Sri Lankan Tamil doctor for sister, 25, US citizen, presently enrolled in Ph.D program. Write with horoscope M 619 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu parents *seek suitable partners for doctor son, 27, fair, tall, resident in neurosurgery in Canada, Mars seventh and daughter, 24, tall, slim, qualifying in June '93 respiratory therapist and anaesthesia technologist (Canada). Canadian and American residents only. M 620 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu *seeks professional or graduate partner for her very fair, slim younger sister, 27, teacher. Send details. M 621 c/o Tamil Times.*

Aunty *seeks groom over 37 for niece, working in Colombo as draughtswoman. Widower considered. Telephone 081-647 8384 for more details.*

Jaffna Hindu *seeks professional partner below 30 for her fair, tall brother, professional practising in U.K. Send details M 623 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu *from good background seeks groom over 35 for attractive daughter, British Citizen, highly qualified and in good professional employment. Write with details. M 624 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu parents *seek fair, attractive, professionally qualified bride under 25, for Master in Computer Science, 28, working in States. Write with horoscope, photo. M 625 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu aunty *seeks bride for nephew, 29, working in U.K. and doing his H.N.D. Ring 081-647 8384, for further details.*

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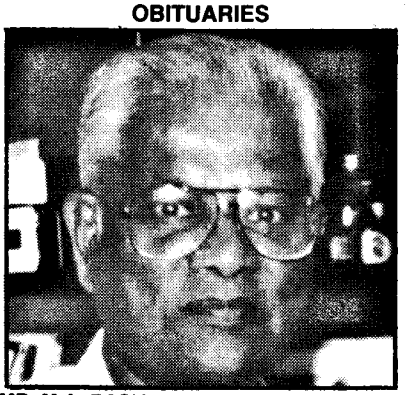
OBITUARIES



MR. M.A. RASIAH. *'Rasiah Master' of Ilavalai (Retired Headmaster, Jaffna, Ceylon and former teacher at Herts Tamil School, Watford, U.K.); beloved husband of Grace Nagaratnam (Ilavalai); loving father (appuji) of Sathianathan (Watford), Packiarajah (Kaluwanchikudi), Bhavani Stella (Dubai), Shanker (New Malden), Nanthini Theresa (Mathagal), Logan (Watford), and Ranjini Emilda (Markham, Canada); father-in-law of Rasammah, Anuradha, Devendra (Appu), Ranji, Nagarajah and Catherine; precious grandfather of Ammu, Sonna, Mathu, Thayalan, Andrew, Rajen, Ravi, Uma, Vijay, Anand, Sarene, Jemina, Damian and Dianna; passed away under tragic circumstances in Jaffna on the 18th September '92.*

He will be forever sadly missed and fondly remembered by his beloved wife, loved ones, relatives and friends. A special service, in his memory, has been arranged by his family for the 25th of October '92 at 3.00pm in the Church of Our Lady and St. Michael, Crown Rise, Garston, Watford Hertfordshire and thereafter an alms giving ceremony at the Orbital Community Centre, Haines Way, Garston. Our kind invitation is hereby extended to all our relatives and friends. Our thanks and gratitude to all for the immense support and sympathy during the time of grief and sorrow.

MAY GOD BLESS HIS SOUL TO REST IN PEACE.

Sathianathan (U.K.), 0923 662970; Shankar (U.K.), 081-949 2888; Logan (U.K.), 0923 662811; Bhavani Devani Devendra (Dubai), 97 14 614784; Ranjini Emilda (Canada), (416) 8871510.

Mrs. Thangaratnan Thangarajah *(Retired Principal, Sri Shanmuga Vidyalayam, Trincomalee/Navaly Maha Vidyalayam, Jaffna); wife of the late Mr. A.W. Thangarajah; mother of Manohari, Dr. Maheswaran (U.K.) and Nirmalarajan (Australia); mother-in-law of Sivashanmugam (Abu Dhabi), Bhavani and Geethanjally; grandmother of Prashanth, Sharmilla, Dhanusha, Vidhya, Bhargavi and Sindhuva passed away on 2nd October 1992. Funeral took place on 7th October 1992 at the Croydon Crematorium (U.K.) according to Hindu rites.*

The family thanks all friends and relatives who attended the funeral, sent floral tributes and messages of condolence. They regret their inability to thank them individually. – 144 Turnpike Link, Park Hill, Croydon, Surrey CR0 5NZ, U.K.

– 7 Audrey Gardens, North Wembley, Middx., HA0 3TF, U.K.

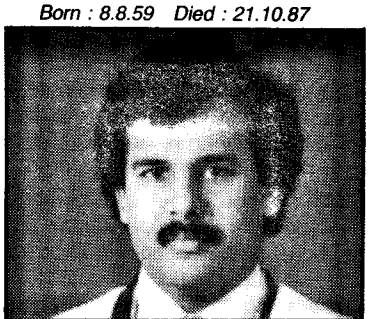
– 2 Flax Place, Quakers Hill, NSW2763, Australia.

Mrs. Josephine Gunapushanam Varnan *née Manikkawasagan, beloved wife of Alex Varnan; daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. Nathan Rajamuttiah Manikkavasagan; sister of the late Emily Thambiratnam, the late Victor, Hilda Mills, Selvam, Faithbuell and Noel; sister-in-law of Mrs. Rajapillai and Navaratnam; aunt of Dr. Indrani Selvarajah, Vilo, Norman, Lakshini, Sureshana and Nishan; grand aunt of Timothy passed away on 21.9.92. funeral took place at General Cemetery, Kanatte, Colombo. Memorial service was held at Upper Tooting Methodist Church, London SW17 on 24th October – 74 Thurlow Hill, London SE21 8JN. Tel: 081-670 7861.*

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Kethusigamany Ganesharatnam

Born : 8.8.59 Died : 21.10.87



Five years have passed without you,
Life will never be the same without you,
Every minute we live is a burden without you,
We are proud of your unselfish sacrifice.

Immeasurably missed by your everloving mother, sister Nages, brother Vicky, brother-in-law Naren and nephew Harry – 6 Blayfield Road, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middx., HA8 0DF, U.K.

In loving memory of **Linganyah s/o Pullikutti Suppiah,** *former S.A.S., S.S.G, Singapore on the second anniversary of his passing away on 4th November 1990.*

Sadly missed and fondly remembered by his loving wife Rani and daughter Anuradha, parents, brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces and other relatives. – 14 Newdale Place, Brampton, Ontario L6S F2Z, Canada.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

October 24 *7.00pm Old Royalists' Association (U.K.) Social Evening & Disco at Sherfield Hall, Imperial College, Exhibition Road, Kensington, London. Tel: 081-427 7407/853 3207.*

Oct. 31 *6.30pm Union College Old Students' Association (U.K.) A.G.M., Dinner & Disco at Heath Clark High School Hall, Cooper Road, Croydon. Tel: 081 993 3772/743 8289/959 9799.*

November 1 *Thirukalyanam. 1.00pm S.C.O.T. Deepavali Lunch at Wandsworth Town Hall, Civic Suite, London SW18 2PU. Tel: 081-870 9897.*

Nov. 6 *Ekathasi.*

Nov. 7 *Pirathosam. 6.30pm Narthana Kalalaya presents 'Annarkali' dance drama and Violin recital by Natha Vidyalaya at Waltham Forest Theatre, Winns Terrace, London E17 Tel: 081-509 1263/964 5868.*

Nov. 10 *Full Moon.*

Nov. 15 *12.30pm Skanda Varodaya College Old Students' Association (U.K.) Annual Reunion Lunch, A.G.M. and Variety Entertainment at Lola Jones Hall, Tooting Leisure Centre, Greaves Place off Garratt Lane, Tooting, London SW17 0NE. Tel: 081-681 2052/692 0823/0892 824661.*

Nov. 20 *Ekathasi.*

Nov. 22 *Pirathosam.*
Nov. 24 Amavasai.

Meera's Memorable Debut

It was a memorable day for **Meera,** *her parents – Sri. and Smt. Vijayaraghavan and for the Guru – Smt. Uma Chandratheva on Saturday, 12th September '92, at Logan Hall, London.*

It was Meera's Bharatanatya Arangetram. She was the third student to have reached the stage of graduation for Smt. Uma Chandratheva, the Guru, a product of Kalakshetra, under the tutelage of Late. Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundel.

The hard working Meera, who strived for perfection, demonstrated her skilful presentation which resulted in a varied and well balanced but traditional programme. From start to finish the repertoire featured complexities of rhythm and movements in which the unexpected featured regularly.

After warming up to a Pushpanjali, Ganesha Stuthi and Alarippu, Meera proceeded to execute the Jathiswaram, in Ragam Hindolam composed by Sri. Karaikudi Krishnamurthi and choreographed by Smt. Uma Chandratheva. The Jathiswaram immediately alerted us to the performance ahead.

After we saw the traditional choreography of Mylapore Gowri Ammal in the Sabdam, Sarasijakshulu, we were treated with a Varnam. This was a composition by the well known violin virtuoso, Sri. Lalgudi Jayaraman. The rendering of the Neelambari Varnam in Tamil, 'Senthil Mevum Deva Deva', by the singer, Sri. Kutralam Nagarajan who evoked all emotions through his modulated voice was noteworthy. Meera excelled in the Nritta.

The second half of the repertoire was indeed varied but well balanced. The Ashtapadi in Ragamalika expressed various Rasas, the Saraswathi Stothram and the Kriti which followed, were sedate and Meera was at her ease. Neelakanda Sivan's keertanam on Nataraja was neat and precise.

Between Thiruppavai and the Bhajan by Meera we saw the Thillana in Ragam Hamsadvani, composed by Sri. K. Krishnamurthi and choreographed by Smt. Uma Chandratheva, which Meera executed perfectly. This Thillana shared the same theme and the Stuthi as the invocatory Ganesha Stuthi at the commencement of the programme. It would have been appropriate if it was performed as the last item, as it would have closed the loop perfectly.

Meera was aided by the perfect Nattuvangam of her guru, the excellent percussion of Sri K. Krishnamurthi, the vocal accompaniment of Sri Kutralam Nagarajan who brought out Bhava and devotion, the popular violinist Sangeetha Vidwan Sri. Thiruvarur Kothandapani and Sri. S. Thayaparan with his melodious contribution as the flutist.

The moment Meera had been waiting for patiently over the years paid dividends. The joy the parents derived and that Meera enjoyed should be an example to all of us and make us realise the cultural, religious and social values that could be part of our enriched life – wherever we are.

Natya Rasika.

Arvind's Violin Concert

On 28th August 1992, we were treated to a very tuneful two and a half hours of violin concert by Master Arvind Jayan, accompanied on the Mridangam by Sri Somasundara Desikar and on the Ghatam by Bangalore Sri Prakash.

In the limited time available, Master Arvind offered a good variety of songs by a number of famous composers such as Muthuswamy Dikshitar, Thayagaraja, Pattanam Subramania Iyer, Madurai Srinivasan, Thanjavur Shankara Iyer and Lalgudi Dayaraman in the melodious ragas Hamsadwani, Shree, Lathangi, Abheri, Thodi, Thilang, Tanjani, Desh and Manavathi, to name some. His exposition of 'Nagumomu' in Abheri deserves special mention. The raga alapana and kalpana-swaras were rendered with poise and skill. The thani-avarthanam on the Mridangam by Sri S. Desikar and on the Ghatam by Sri Prakash was particularly enjoyable adding a meruku or special 'polish' to this piece, and also to the entire concert.

It is heartwarming that Master Arvind has acquired a deep understanding of the finesse of Carnatic Music, although he was born, brought up and trained outside India.

Dr. Lakshmi Jayan has been uniquely successful in transferring her virtuosity on the violin to her beloved son to such a high standard, that with some extra hard work in the playing of ragam, thanam, pallavi, Master Arvind will surely reach the top.

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Mr. Pooranampillai

A Man of Calibre

Writing a Biography, might perhaps mean invading one's privacy, but my aim is, to write about someone greatly admired for decades, for his work as an educationist. As I write this, it takes me back 35 years to the time, when I had the opportunity to be on the staff of Hartley College for five years when **Mr. Pooranampillai** was Principal. I am pleased as many other who know him well, that he has been able to make a visit to the U.K. with his wife and give us a chance to meet them and recall happy memories.

K.P. as he was fondly referred to by all those who knew him and worked with him, was a person of high intellect, integrity and great discipline. He displayed the qualities of an eminent educationist and Headmaster that Vadamaradchy ever produced. Being a man of the soil, he knew practically every student and his background, and could relate to the community at large and to all situations that arose during his period as Principal. Within a few years of his Principalship, he helped to create the corner stone of the educational system in the north, and of Hartley, in particular. His reputation rested on high motivation coupled with discipline, which formed the driving force to his success.

His pursuit for achievement, lay in his untiring efforts and the skills he possessed, which were evident in the standard he maintained in the school and in the results Hartley produced, both in academics and in the field of sport. He was a man of unique courage and determination, and always worked hard with the school's interest in mind. He adopted progressive methods of teaching, designed to give a greater degree of flexibility in the school curriculum.

When I joined Hartley in January 1953 as a young teacher, rather inexperienced, I was filled in the beginning with some apprehension as to what was expected in a classroom situation, and was faced with a dilemma, what kind of task master I was going to work for. As time sped by, I soon gained my feet and learned what motivates pupils that generates good results, and that teacher morale is an important ingredient in the whole exercise.

A very good relationship existed between the Head and the staff who always held him in high esteem and looked up to him for help and guidance. He had the capacity for great

Continued on page 28

BOOK REVIEW

Medicine Betrayed

Medicine Betrayed: The participation of doctors in human rights abuses, British Medical Association, Zed Books, £12.95, pp.235.

'. . .He took my arm and very smoothly (said): "You know, Jacobo, that we doctors have many secrets. . .you see here: this blue is one of your arteries and I can inject here. You know that we have some substances that make you talk but it is always so painful because it affects your brains; so why can't you just talk and we can be friends". His presence was terrible because he was the symbol that a scientific instrument is with you when you are tortured by the beasts.'

This quotation from Jacobo Timerman, the Argentinian writer, introduces the new report by a working party of the British Medical Association, aptly setting the scene for a thorough exposition of the role of doctors in torture.

The working party, chaired by Sir Douglas Black, has spent the last two years taking evidence from a number of organisations including many national Medical associations, several of the Royal Colleges, Physicians for Human Rights, the Johannes Wier Foundation and the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture. But by far the greatest contribution was from Amnesty International with James Welch of the International Secretariat as Working Party Consultant.

A previous BMA report, The Torture Report, published in 1986 was influential in shaping ethical standards among doctors in many countries, but its scope was limited. The new report embraces not only medical involvement in torture, both as perpetrators and victims, but discusses the role of doctors in corporal punishment, the death penalty, abuse of psychiatry, hunger strikes, withholding of treatment and forcible examination of prisoners.

Of great topical interest is discussion of the problems of asylum seekers, particularly those held in detention where the conditions of detention may seriously aggravate the psychological state. Other more marginal subjects are virginity testing, forcible sterilisation, experimentation upon prisoners and trade in human organs for transplant.

Naturally, the report refers mostly to instances in other countries, but enough material has been gathered of practices in the UK, either current or in the recent past, to give cause for concern.

Recognising the impossible dilemma some doctors find themselves in, the report ends with a comprehensive set of recommendations for the prevention of doctors becoming involved in human rights abuses, ways in which they may get help if they find themselves being drawn in and ways of reporting the detection of abuses.

Those in particular need are doctors in situations of risk, such as the armed forces, police or prison services. They can appeal to their national medical body or, if that is not able or willing to support their members, there are international bodies who have a duty to intervene.

● Dr. Fleur Fisher, who has succeeded Dr. John Dawson as head of the Scientific, Professional and International Division of the BMA, writes: 'This report is a living memorial to the late Dr. John Dawson to whom it is dedicated. It was his vision of the importance of doctors in the defence of human rights which is central to the BMA's involvement in this field.

'He inspired the Association to set up the Working Party which now reports. The message in *Medicine Betrayed* is of significance to every doctor in every country. As doctors we see people at their most vulnerable. The individual human rights of every patient must be jealously safeguarded by the profession, whether we are looking after patients in a residential facility in the UK or a prison in Turkey. The rights of prisoners, especially those in repressive regimes, are of particular concern. This book will help all doctors to be aware of their ethical responsibilities to the patient in front of them and their response as members of the international medical community.'

Medicine Betrayed is available from **AIBS Publications Department**, 99-119 Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4RE.

– Dr. Duncan Forrest,
Amnesty International,
British Section, Medical Group.

Initiative for Peace and Democracy

Dr. Gavin Karunaratna a former Civil Servant from Sri Lanka, now a London based consultant to international voluntary organisations specialising in development studies in third world countries addressed a largely attended seminar held at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London last Wednesday (26/08/1992) on the subject 'STATE OF DEMOCRACY IN SRI LANKA'.

The lecture was sponsored by the South Asian Legal Research Seminar, an academic research unit of the SOAS that invites specialists to address interested gatherings on current topics of importance.

Among the audience that participated in the seminar were Buddhist monks, University academics from Sri Lanka, ex parliamentarians, lawyers in exile and representatives from various human rights organisations concerned about the Sri Lankan situation.

The lecturer dealt with the problem of the erosion of democracy in Sri Lanka under the new Executive Presidential system of government, the failure of the multi-party system of government that has contributed to the steady decline and near collapse of public administration where political interference at all levels has had a cancer-like de-energising effect.

Continued from page 27

understanding to direct and advise both staff and students whenever necessary.

Mr. Pooranampillai was an old boy of Hartley. He served the school for over three decades – first, as a teacher in 1932, then was Vice Principal in 1943 and from 1944–1967 was Principal of Hartley College. After his distinguished career at Hartley he joined St. John's College, which was enticed by his brilliance as an educationist and he was the Principal for nine years until 1976.

His addresses at meetings and open-day speeches, resound in our ears today. His presence in the U.K. renews our association with him. It enables us, whilst he is in our midst, to reflect on the past, and the many occasions we sought his guidance. In August this year, the Past Pupils Association of Hartley, had a Dinner in honour of him. That gathering was reminiscent of the old Hartley, of which we were all once part. We shall cherish happy memories of that era.

Mr. Pooranampillai is a devoted family man, and a man of the community he served. He endeared all those around him with his charm and admirable ways. Fond memories of him will always remain with us. We wish him and Mrs. Pooranampillai an enjoyable stay in the U.K. and continued good health.

Mrs. Chandra Ratnavel,
(née Alagaratam)
Sheffield, U.K.

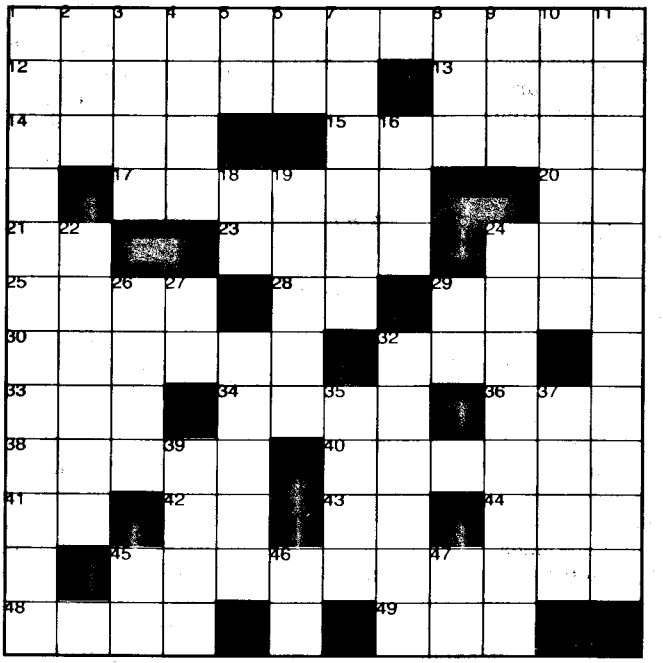
QUIZ CROSSWORDS – No. 21. Compiled by: Richards

Closing date for completed grid and coupon to be received is 30 November 1992.

Answers and the name of the winner – first all correct entry pulled out of a bag – will be announced in the December 1992 issue.

The winner will receive a prize of £10.00 sterling.

All entries should be sent to: Tamil Times, P.O. Box 121, Sutton, Surrey SM1 3TD, UK.



Across.

1. Politicians at times risk a nation to such type of policies (12)
12. Group of islands in the Indian Ocean used as convict colony by the British masters of India (7)
13. Often in the name of God, a solemn declaration (4)
14. Ancient classical Greek temple (4)
15. Three with such a name were assassinated, one by a religious fanatic, the other a political conspiracy and the third still unresolved (6)
17. Flowed in ripples making a gentle splashing sound (6)
20. Higher secondary educational pursuit (2)
21. Ante prandium, before a meal, abb. (2)
23. Kept in custody (4)
24. Scientific, abb. (3)
25. A breach of friendly relations (4)
28. Prefix for two or more of these that are legally tendered in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka (2)
29. We do these to what we sow not necessarily on the land (4)
30. A name that began with an airport tragedy and ended up with a country's peaceful liberation from a dictator (6)
32. Membranous bag in an animal or vegetable organism (3)
33. Mother Therese is the most famous of them all today (3)
34. In a different way (4)
36. Rim in disorder (3)
38. Mosquito that transmits yellow and dengue fevers (5)
40. A part of the Mediterannean between Greece and Turkey (6)
41. Inherited psychological impulses which emerge from the unconscious mind (2)
42. Key state, briefly, in the forthcoming US presidential elections (2)
43. Today's craze in the music system (2)
44. Widely used adjectively in assisting to define a noun (3)
45. Western mercenaries attempted a coup in this island state but came to grief even before they could get out of the airport (10)
48. Black hardwood, briefly (4)
49. Expressed to contradict (3)

Down:

1. Led the world to a new dimension in the political leadership of a nation (12)
2. An acid that plays an important role in the synthesis of proteins (3)
3. An object of excessive devotion (4)
4. America's foremost space organisation (4)
5. Measure of distance, briefly (2)
6. Mother affectionately (2)
7. They brought tidings of great joy to the shepherds who gathered their flocks by night (6)
8. A relationship that Jesus claimed was his to God (3)
9. Possessed or experienced (3)
10. A township that figured in Homer's Iliad (6)
11. Held by Spain as a colony for 333 years until 1898, this land of 7,000 islands has a harmonious mix of Malay-Polynesian-Chinese-Indian people (11)
16. Make a further remark to something already said (3)
18. Measure of acidity or alkaline level of a solution (2)
19. Isabella even as president could not live up to the popularity of her husband's first wife, First Lady Eva, and was overthrown by the Argentianian armed forces (5)
22. Wounded pride (6)
24. kept, meant or expressed from the knowledge or views of all except a few (8)
26. Cash set apart for a particular purpose (4)
27. Do, re, mi, fa, so, la and what follows – remember Sound of Music! (2)
29. Egyptian mythical deity (2)
31. Gossip and rumour mongers are such kind of people and they cause much sadness (5)
32. Olaf Palme was an enlightened leader of this country (6)
35. Every one of two or more persons (4)
37. Named after a French bureaucrat, this Western Indian Ocean island has 90 per cent of its country's population (4)
39. Level, free from irregularities (4)
45. – be it, expressing acceptance or even resignation (2)
46. Chemical symbol for calcium (2)
47. 'A note to follow sew' (2)

Quiz Crosswords – 19: Solutions.

Across: 1. Chavakacheri. 12. Homagama. 13. Can. 14. US. 15. Enigma. 16. Neap. 19. Dry. 20. Dev. 22. Navaly. 25. Di. 26. Ara. 27. Thovil. 29. Keratin. 31. Nat. 32. Amine. 33. NL. 35. Ctn. 36. Halal. 38. Aeht. 39. Palaly. 40. As. 41. Malaise. 42. Chankanai. 43. OR.

Down: 1. Chunnakam. 2. Bosea. 3. am. 4. Va. 5. Age. 6. Kandy. 7. Amir. 8. Cagy. 9. Ecad. 10. Ra. 11. Inuvil. 17. Avarice. 18. Paranthan. 21. Edit. 23. Latent. 24. Ponnalai. 27. TNT. 28. Vallai. 30. Em. 34. Flyer. 36. Hala. 39. Pan. 40. Ac. 41. MA.

Winner: Mr. S.S. Vaitilingam, 12 Essex Court, Essex Drive, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4JZ.

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which he dedicated his life; (b) To establish a library of social sciences which shall include subjects encompassing politics, economics, labour trade unionism and human rights; and (c) To promote and organise research pertaining to politics, economics, labour, human rights and other socio-economic matters.

A statue of the late LSSP leader is to be erected at the junction near Ayurveda Hospital at Dr. N.M. Perera Mawatha. The N.M. Perera Memorial Trust Fund also organised commemoration activities on his 13th death anniversary on 18 August. Dr. Carlo Fonseka, Professor of Physiology and Dean of Medicine of the University of Kelaniya delivered the 'Dr. N.M. Perera Seventh Memorial Lecture' on the 'Philosophy and Science of N.M. Perera's Politics'.

★ Notice Issued on EPDP Leader

Douglas Devandnada, leader of the Eelam Peoples Democratic Party (EPDP) which is a pro-government Tamil group, has recently been issued with a notice by the Court of Appeal in connection with a Habeas Corpus application filed by Mrs. V. Nageswary, a refugee living at the Refugee Camp at Pannikka Pillaiyar Temple, Bambalapitiya in Colombo. Her petition alleged that on 6 June 1992 a person called over at the camp from the office of the EPDP and took her 19-year-old son Velaidan Ravindran to its office at 121 Park Road, in Narahenpita in Colombo, and thereafter the whereabouts of her son was not known. Subsequently Mrs. Nageswary had gone to the EPDP office, made inquiries with regard to her son, and was told by one Romesh that her son could not be released in view of having committed certain offences. Apart from plucking a coconut at the temple, her son had not committed any offence and none of the members of the EPDP had any authority to arrest her son. Mrs. Nageswary had asked the Court to order the EPDP and its leader to produce her son and grant her custody.

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the Tamil people in the Northeast has more to do with Tiger coercion than with Tamil consent to Tiger rule. Still, if the Tigers are defeated, what is to prevent the Premadasa regime from refusing to grant federalism to the Northeast?

New Forms of Struggle

The answer, of course, is nothing. The Premadasa regime, as mentioned earlier, doesn't need to end the conflict in order to survive. And if the armed part of the conflict is over, it may succumb to Sinhala nationalist pressure and continue its refusal to grant an adequate package of devolution to the Tamils. But this is no different from when the Tigers were present. Their armed presence has not compelled the Premadasa regime to grant federal autonomy to the Tamil people. A defeat of the Tigers will not preclude the Tamils from mobilising and agitating for their rights. Tamils will be able to raise their voices more freely and express disagreements amongst themselves as they organise against the Sri Lankan state. They can harness support from within the Tamil community, from sympathetic Muslims and Sinhalese, and internationally to further their struggle for justice. Their voices may be stifled by an oppressive government unwilling to reach a settlement, but at least, they will be freed from the internal shackles of their so-called liberators.

New strategies for non-violent political struggle will have to be mapped out since the armed struggle under the domination of the Tigers has become morally and politically bankrupt. This will involve a period of innovation as Tamils search for new means of political expression. The choice before the Tamil people is not only between armed struggle and non-violent civil disobedience to the use of non-lethal forms of agitation. For example, the *Intifada,* which unexpectedly emerged from the defeat of the Palestinian armed struggle, has shown us how an unarmed people can use non-lethal means of agitation to effectively express their opposition. And if today the Israelis are compelled to negotiate with the Palestinians, it is because of the decrease in Western support for Israel subsequent to the *Intifada.* Although it is unclear what the Tamil future will be after the Tigers have been defeated (because it will be created by Tamils, themselves), it is clear that if the Tigers continue to maintain their stranglehold on Tamil politics, the Tamil people will be denied the option of peace with dignity.

Conclusion

The chronology of pro-Tiger arguments indicates how opinions about the Tigers, even among Tamil nationalists, have evolved from the notion that they are exemplary freedom fighters to the notion that, despite their brutality and cruelty, they are all the Tamil people have. The 'sole representative' argument was a positive endorsement of the Tigers, but the 'last defence' arguyment is merely a strained attempt at defending them. This pessmistic view of Tamil politics, however, ignores the silent yearning for peace and justice of the civilians in the Northeast. They have a story to tell and a political project to carry out. But they have been silenced and the political possibility that they represent has been sabotaged by threats and violence. Thus, for the Tamil people's desire for justice to become a political reality, Tigerism must go.

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